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THE

COLLECTED WORKS OF WILLIAM HAZLITT

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

VOLUME TWO

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Thomas Holcroft.
From the painting by John Opie, R.A.
in the National Portrait Gallery.

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
WILLIAM HAZLITT

EDITED BY A. R. WALLER
AND ARNOLD GLOVER

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
W. E. HENLEY

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Memoirs of Thomas Holcroft
Liber Amoris
Characteristics

◆

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MEMOIRS OF THE LATE THOMAS HOLCROFT

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The *Memoirs of the late Thomas Holcroft, Written by Himself, and continued to the time of his death, from his diary, notes, and other papers,* were published in three volumes (6⅜ × 3⅞), London, 1816, *printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster-row,* by J. M‘Creery, Black Horse Court, Fleet Street. The division of the work is explained in Hazlitt's *Advertisement.* Vol. I. contains Book i. (Mr. Holcroft's Narrative) and Book ii.; Vol. II. contains Book iii. and seven chapters of Book iv., in the last chapter of which Mr. Holcroft's Diary begins (June 22nd—July 18th, 1798); Vol. III. opens without any reference to a 'Book' and heads the conclusion of the Diary (July 19th, 1798—March 12th, 1799) 'Chap. I.' In the present edition it has seemed well to ignore this arbitrary 'Chap. I.' heading, to run the Diary straight on, and to head Chap. II. in the 3rd vol. Chap. VIII., thus completing Book iv. The remainder of Vol. III. after this chapter is occupied by *Letters to and from the author.*

It will be seen that a delay of six years took place between the date of Hazlitt's *Advertisement* and the publication of the volumes. Mr. W. C. Hazlitt writes: 'These *Memoirs* were never, in spite of all the lapse of time, completely printed; only three volumes out of four were printed.' Every endeavour to find this fourth volume has failed. The *Memoirs* were reprinted, abridged, in Longman's 'Travellers' Library,' 1852. The present issue reproduces the first edition.

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Mr. Holcroft had intended, for several years before his death, to write an account of his own life. It is now only to be regretted that he did not begin to execute this design sooner. Few lives have been marked with more striking changes; and no one possessed the qualities necessary for describing them with characteristic liveliness in a greater degree than he did. It often happens, that what we most wish done, we fail to do, either through fear lest the execution should not answer our expectations, or because the pleasure with which we contemplate a favourite object at a distance, makes us neglect the ordinary means of attaining it. This seems to have been the case with Mr. Holcroft, who did not begin the work he had so long projected, till within a short time of his death. How much he had it at heart, may however be inferred from the extraordinary pains he then took to make some progress in it. He told his physicians that he did not care what severity of treatment he was subjected to, provided he could live six months longer to complete what he had begun. By dictating a word at a time, he succeeded in bringing it down to his fifteenth year. When the clearness, minuteness, and vividness of what he thus wrote, are compared with the feeble, half-convulsed state in which it was written, it will be difficult to bring a stronger instance of the exertion of resolution and firmness of mind, under such circumstances. The whole of this account is given literally to the public. This part comprises the first seventeen Chapters, or Book I. The remainder of the Life has been compiled from Mr. Holcroft's

Letters; from Journals and other papers to which I had access; from conversations with some of his early and most intimate friends; and from passages in his printed works, relating to his own history and adventures, pointed out to me by them. Some of the anecdotes I have also heard mentioned by himself; but these are comparatively few. I first became acquainted with Mr. Holcroft about ten years ago; my chief intercourse with him was within the last three or four years of his life.

William Hazlitt.

January, 1810.

THE LIFE OF THOMAS HOLCROFT

BOOK I

CHAPTER I

[*This and the remaining Chapters of the first Book are in Mr. Holcroft's own words.*]

'I WAS born in London, in Orange Court, Leicester Fields, on the 10th day of December, 1745, old style; and was baptized and registered in St. Martin's church, where my name is erroneously written Howlcroft. In a will of one of my uncle's, which may be seen in Doctors' Commons, the name is spelt Houldecroft. From this it appears that our family did not pay much attention to subjects of orthography, or think the manner in which their name was spelt, a matter of importance.

'Most persons, I believe, retain through life, a few strong impressions of very early childhood. I have a recollection of being played with by my parents, when very young, and of the extreme pleasure it gave me. On another occasion, as I and one or two of my brothers or sisters were playing in the court, and kneeling and peeping down a cellar window, where there were some fowls, a shutter that belonged to the window, and was fastened up, by some means or other got loose, and entirely cut off one side of my sister Anne's thumb;—a disaster never afterwards to be forgotten. My father one day whipped me very severely for crying to go to a school in the neighbourhood, where children were sent rather to keep them out of the way, than to learn any thing. He afterwards ordered an apprentice he had to take me to school. This apprentice was an exceedingly hard-featured youth, with thick lips, wide mouth, broad nose, and his face very much marked with the small-pox, but very kind and good tempered. I perfectly remember his carrying me in my petticoats, consoling me as we went, and giving me something nice to eat. Perhaps I bear his features in mind the more accurately, because I occasionally saw him afterwards, till I was seven or eight years old, when he used to visit my father, who was then under misfortunes. He seldom came without something kind to say, or good to give: but his last and capital gift, too precious to be ever forgotten, consisted of two small books. One was the History of Parismus and Parismenos, and the other, of the Seven Champions of Christendom. These were to me an inestimable treasure, that often brought the rugged, good natured Dick to my remembrance, with no slight sense of obligation.

'Till I was about six years old, my father kept a shoe-maker's shop in Orange Court; and I have a faint recollection that my mother dealt in greens and oysters. After I became a man, my father more than once pointed out the house to me: the back of it looks into the King's Mews, and it is now No. 13. My father was fond of speculation, and very adventurous. I believe he had been set up in trade by my uncle John, who lived several years, first as a helper, and afterwards as a groom in the King's stables; where, being an excellent economist, he saved money. For a time, my father, through John's influence, was admitted a helper in the stables; but he did not continue there long, not having his brother's perseverance. How or when he procured the little knowledge of shoe-making which he had, I do not recollect; though I have heard him mention the fact. He was not bred to the trade. He and a numerous family of his brothers and sisters all spent their infancy in *the field country*; or, as I have heard him describe it, the most desolate part of Lancashire, called Martin's Muir, where my grand-father was a cooper; a man, according to my father's account, possessed of good qualities, but passionate, and a dear lover of Sir John-Barleycorn. My grandmother was always mentioned by my father with very great respect.

'At the period of which I speak, the west end of London swarmed with chairmen; who, that they might tread more safely, had their shoes made differently from those of other people; to which particular branch of the trade my father applied himself with some success. But he was not satisfied with the profits he acquired by shoe-making: he was very fond of horses, and having some knowledge of them, he became a dealer in them. Few persons but the great, at this time kept any sort of carriage. It was common for those who wished to ride out, to hire a horse for the day; and my father kept several horses for this purpose. If his word was to be taken, they were such as were not very easily to be matched. The praise he bestowed on them for their performances, and his admiration of their make and beauty, were strong and continued. Young as I was, he earnestly wished to see me able to ride. He had a beautiful poney (at least so he called, and so I thought, it): but it was not more remarkable for its beauty, than its animation. To hold it, required all my father's strength and skill; yet he was determined I should mount this poney, and accompany him, whenever he took a ride. For this purpose my petticoats were discarded; and as he was fonder of me than even of his horses, nay, or of his poney, he had straps made, and I was buckled to the saddle, with a leading rein fastened to the muzzle of the poney, which he carefully held. These rides, with the oddity of our equipage and appearance, sometimes exposed us to the ridicule of bantering acquaintance; but I remember no harm that happened.

'About the same time, my father indulged another whim; whether he was led to it by any particular accident, I cannot tell. I must have been about five years old, when he put me under the tuition of a player on the violin, who was a public performer of some repute. Either parental fondness led my father to believe, or he was flattered into the supposition, that I had an uncommon aptitude for the art I had been put to learn. I shall never forget the high praises I received, the affirmation that I was a prodigy, and the assurances my teachers gave that I should soon be heard in public. These dreams were never realized.

'My father was under great obligations to my uncle John, and was afraid, especially just at that time, of disobliging him. My uncle's pride took the alarm; and after marking his disapprobation, he asked with contempt, "Do you mean to make a fiddler of the boy?" My practice on the violin therefore ceased; and it is perhaps worth remarking, that, though I could play so well before I was six years old, I had wholly forgotten the art at the age of seven; for, after my master left me, I never touched the instrument. In the days of my youthful distress, I have sometimes thought, with bitter regret, of the absurd pride of my uncle.

CHAPTER II

'Thus far my infantine life had passed under much more favourable circumstances than are common to the children of the poor. But, when I was about six years old, the scene suddenly changed, a long train of increasing hardships began, and I have no doubt my sufferings were rendered more severe from a consciousness of the little I had suffered till then. This may therefore be properly considered as the first remarkable era in my life.

'How far the state of my father's affairs might contribute to the steps he took, is more than I now can tell: but on a sudden the house-keeping broke up, the horses were sold, and we went into Berkshire, somewhere beyond Ascot Heath, about thirty miles from London, where my father had taken a house. What became of his effects, in what manner they were sold, and of every circumstance of that kind, I am totally ignorant.

'I suppose the time of our residence in Berkshire to have been about twelve months. The house where we lived, was situated at the corner of the road, the last of a small Green, or Common, down which the road had a descent. For I remember my father at first had a tall, high-boned hack, on the bare back of which I used by his order to gallop down the hill, though I felt great difficulty in keeping my seat. It was in this retired spot that my father himself began to teach me to read. The task at first I found difficult, till the idea one day suddenly seized me of catching all the sounds I had been taught from the arrangement of the letters; and my joy at this amazing discovery was so great, that the recollection of it has never been effaced. After that, my progress was so rapid, that it astonished my father. He boasted of me to every body; and that I might lose no time, the task he set me was eleven chapters a day in the Old Testament. I might indeed have deceived my father by skipping some of the chapters, but a dawning regard for truth, aided by the love I had of reading, and the wonderful histories I sometimes found in the Sacred Writings, generally induced me to go through the whole of my task. One day as I was sitting at the gate with my Bible in my hand, a neighbouring farmer, coming to see my father, asked me if I could read the Bible already? I answered, yes; and he desired me to let him hear me. I began at the place where the book was open, read fluently, and afterwards told him, that if he pleased, he should hear the tenth chapter of Nehemiah. At this he seemed still more amazed, and wishing to be convinced, bade me read. After listening till he found I could really pronounce the uncouth Hebrew names so much better and more easily than he supposed to be within the power of so young a child, he patted my head, gave me a penny, and said I was an uncommon boy. It would be hard to say whether his praise or his gift was most flattering to me. Soon after, my father's apprentice, the kind-hearted Dick, who came backward and forward to my father on his affairs, brought me the two delightful histories I have above-mentioned, which were among those then called Chapman's Books. It was scarcely possible for any thing to have been more grateful to me than this present. Parismus and Parismenos, with all the adventures detailed in the

Seven Champions of Christendom, were soon as familiar to me as my catechism, or the daily prayers I repeated kneeling before my father. Oh, how I loved poor Dick!

'My father was an excellent pedestrian, and would often walk to London and back again, more than sixty miles, in the same day. Sometimes he dined at home, and went to London in the afternoon; and even then, I rather think, though I cannot be certain, that he made a point of sleeping in his own house. In height he was about five feet four, perfectly free from corpulency, sober, and satisfied with plain, wholesome diet. He used to speak with great self-complacency of the manner in which he overcame competitors in walking, with whom he sometimes chanced to meet. "I have been overtaken by tall men," he would say, "with whom I could not keep pace, and they have bid me good bye, and told me they should be in London at such a time before me: but they were every one of them mistaken. They could not proceed without stopping to rest, and taking their pint of beer, their bread and cheese, or whatever they could get to eat and drink. I was never far behind them, I wanted nothing to eat or drink, I was not weary, I passed the houses in which they were sitting, and got forward sometimes more than a mile before them; while they would make another call, perhaps, and another, so that I always arrived before them."

'One afternoon, however, he was desirous of going to town at a later hour than usual, and therefore, for expedition's sake, he borrowed a light grey horse of a neighbour, on condition that it should be returned that evening. He then mounted, and placed me behind him, trusting to my courage and good sense for finding my way home with the horse. I know not how far he took me, except that we passed over some part of Ascot Heath, if not all of it; and about an hour before it was dark, he alighted, left me on horse-back, and carefully gave me such directions as he supposed I could not mistake. In this he conjectured rightly; I began to trot away, anxious to get home before it was too dark; but unluckily for me, some time after we had parted, with no human being in sight, nor any likelihood of meeting one, the horse stumbled among some ruts, and threw my hat off. To have lost my hat would have been a terrible misfortune; I therefore ventured to alight and pick it up. Then it was that I perceived my distress. I found every attempt I made to remount wholly ineffectual, and all I could do was to endeavour to drag the sluggish animal along, and cry bitterly. Twilight was fast approaching, and I alone on the heath, (I knew not how far from home), and never expecting to reach that desired place that evening. At length, however, the white railing of the

Race Course on Ascot Heath came in sight, and I conceived hopes of remounting. Accordingly I with great difficulty prevailed on my grey nag to stand tolerably nigh the railing, on which I clambered, and with almost unspeakable joy I found myself once more seated on his back. I had another piece of good fortune; for, before I had gone far, a neighbour happened to be passing, who, seeing a child so circumstanced, came up, asked me some questions, heard the story I had to tell, and not only conveyed me safe to the village, but to his own house, where he gave me something comfortable to eat and drink, sent the horse to its right owner, and put me into the charge of some one, who took me home.[1]

'I know nothing that tends so much as the anecdotes of childhood, when faithfully recorded, to guide the philosopher through that very abstruse but important labyrinth, the gradations that lead to the full stature, peculiar form, temperament, character, and qualities of the man. I am therefore anxious to recount all those concerning myself, which I suppose may conduce to this purpose.

'My father was very fond, and not a little vain, of me. He delighted to shew how much I was superior to other children, and this propensity had sometimes a good effect. One evening when it was quite dark, daylight having entirely disappeared, and the night being cloudy, he was boasting to a neighbour of my courage; and his companion seeming rather to doubt, my father replied, he would put it immediately to the proof. "Tom," said he, "you must go to the house of Farmer such a one," (I well remember the walk, but not the name of the person,) "and ask whether he goes to London to morrow." I was startled, but durst not dispute his authority, it was too great over me, besides that my vanity to prove my valor was not a little excited: accordingly I took my hat, and immediately obeyed.

'The house I was sent to, as far as I can remember, must have been between a quarter and half a mile distant; and the road that led to it, was by the side of the hedge on the left hand of the Common. However, I knew the way well enough, and proceeded; but it was with many stops, starts, and fears. It may be proper to observe here, that although I could not have been without courage, yet I was really, when a child, exceedingly apprehensive, and full of superstition. When I saw magpies, it denoted good or ill luck, according as they did or did not cross me. When walking, I pored for pins, or rusty nails; which, if they lay in certain directions, foreboded some misfortune. Many such whims possessed my brain —I was therefore not at all free from notions of this kind, on the present occasion. However, I went forward on my errand, humming, whistling, and looking as carefully as I could; now and then making a false step, which helped to relieve me, for it obliged me to attend to the road. When I came to the farm-house, I delivered my message. "Bless me, child," cried the people within, "have you come, this dark night, all alone?" "Oh yes," I said, assuming an air of self-consequence. "And who sent you?" "My father wanted to *know*," I replied equivocally. One of them then offered to take me home, but of this I would by no means admit. My whole little stock of vanity was roused, and I hastily scampered out of the house, and was hidden in the dark. My return was something, but not much less alarming than my journey thither. At last I got safely home, glad to be rid of my fears, and inwardly not a little elated with my success. "Did you hear or see any body, Tom," said my father, "as you went or came back?" "No," said I, "it was quite dark; not but I thought once or twice, I did hear something behind me." In fact, it was my father and his companion, who had followed me at a little distance. This, my father, in fondly praising me for my courage, some time after told me.

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[1] Mr. Holcroft has made use of this incident in the first Volume of Hugh Trevor, see p. 40.

CHAPTER III

'All that I now recollect more of this residence in Berkshire is, that my father, after having been from home longer than usual, put a sudden, and to me unexpected end to it—took me with him, and for some time travelled round the country.

'The first place I distinctly remember myself, was London, where I have a faint notion of having been among boys with their school-books. Whether I was sent to school for a week or two, while my father and mother were adjusting their affairs, and preparing for their new career, is more than I can affirm or deny: though I have no recollection of acquiring any knowledge, a thing which, before this, had begun to make a strong impression on me. If I were really sent to school, it must have been for a very short time, nor could I have been provided with books or other means of improvement. And indeed my father was so straitened in his circumstances, that my mother very soon after agreed to turn pedlar, hung a basket with pins, needles, tape, garters, and other small haberdashery, on her arm, and hawked them through the outskirts and neighbourhood of London, while I trotted after her. I might at first perhaps feel some disgust at this employment: but use soon reconciled me to it, as the following anecdote will shew.

'I cannot say what my father's employment was, while I and my mother were, what they emphatically called *tramping* the villages, to hawk our pedlary. It may be presumed, however, that it was not very lucrative, for he soon after left it, and he and my mother went into the country, hawking their small wares, and dragging me after them. They went first to Cambridge, and afterwards, as their hopes of success led them, traversed the neighbouring villages. Among these we came to one which I thought most remarkably clean, well built, and unlike villages in general: my father said it was the handsomest in the kingdom. We must have been very poor, however, and hard-driven on this occasion; for here it was that I was either encouraged, or commanded, one day to go by myself, from house to house, and beg. Young as I was, I had considerable readiness in making out a story, and on this day, my little inventive faculties shone forth with much brilliancy. I told one story at one house, another at another, and continued to vary my tale just as the suggestions arose: the consequence of which was, that I moved the good country people exceedingly. One called me a poor fatherless child: another exclaimed, what a pity! I had so much sense! a third patted my head, and prayed God to preserve me, that I might make a good man. And most of them contributed either by scraps of meat, farthings, bread and cheese, or other homely offers, to enrich me, and send me away with my pockets loaded. I joyfully brought as much of my stores as I could carry, to the place of rendezvous my parents had appointed, where I astonished them by again reciting the false tales I had so readily invented. My father, whose passions were easily moved, felt no little conflict of mind as I proceeded. I can now, in imagination, see the working of his features. "God bless the boy! I never heard the like!" Then turning to my mother, he exclaimed with great earnestness—"This must not be! the poor child will become a common place liar! A hedge-side rogue!—He will learn to pilfer!—Turn a confirmed vagrant!—Go on the high way when he is older, and get hanged. He shall never go on such errands again." How fortunate for me in this respect, that I had such a father! He was driven by extreme poverty, restless anxiety, and a brain too prone to sanguine expectation, into many absurdities, which were but the harbingers of fresh misfortunes: but he had as much integrity and honesty of heart as perhaps any man in the kingdom, who had had no greater advantages. It pleases me now to recollect, that, though I had a consciousness that my talents could keep my parents from want, I had a still stronger sense of the justice of my father's remarks. As it happened, I had not only read and remembered the consequences of good and evil, as they are pointed out in the Scriptures, but I had also become acquainted with some of the renowned heroes of fable; and to be a liar, a rogue, and get hanged, did not square well with the confused ideas I had either of goodness or greatness, or with my notions of a hero.

'From the vicinity of Cambridge, we passed on to the Isle of Ely, hawking our different wares, pins, laces, tempting ribbons, and garters, in every village we came to; arriving first at Peterborough, and afterwards taking care to be present at Wisbeach fair. Markets, fairs, and wakes, were indeed the great objects which regulated all our motions.

'The Isle of Ely, from its marshy nature, is much infested by the reptile tribes. One day, as we were pushing forward through the grass by the road side, I saw what I imagined to be a beautiful ribbon, striped and spotted with various colours, but chiefly blue and white; and with great surprise catching hold of my mother's arm, I cried, "Look, mammy, look!" No less admiring what she saw than myself, and equally mistaken,—"Bless me," said she, "how pretty!" Then stooping to take it up, she touched it; but our surprise now greatly increased, when a large snake uncoiled itself, darted forward, and in a moment was out of sight. My father was much amused at the terror we felt. He had lived for some time with a farmer, and knew the difference between the adder and common snake tribes, with the harmless nature of the latter. For in summer and autumn, whenever he could come upon a sleeping snake, he made it his diversion to catch it by the tail, shake it when it attempted to rise, and bring it with him wherever he was going. A country woman, with whom we met shortly after, told us that the breed of snakes was so common in those parts, that they could not be kept out of their cottages, where they frequently took shelter, especially in the night.

'The things of which I have the most distinct recollection as connected with the Isle of Ely, are its marshy lands, multiplied ditches, long broad grass, low and numerous draining mills; with the cathedral of Peterborough, which I thought beautiful: but above all, those then dear and delightful creatures, a quack doctor, peeping from behind his curtain, and that droll devil his merry Andrew, apparitions first beheld by me at Wisbeach fair. It was a pleasure so unexpected, so exquisite, so rich and rare, that I followed the merry Andrew and his drummer through the streets, gliding under arms and between legs, never long together three yards apart from him; almost bursting with laughter at his extreme comicality; tracing the gridirons, punchinellos, and pantomime figures on his jacket; wondering at the manner in which he twirled his hat in the air, and again caught it so dexterously on his head. My curiosity did not abate, when he examined to see if there was not some little devil hid within it, with a grotesque squint of his eyes, twist of his nose, and the exclamation, "Oh, ho! have I caught you, Mr. Imp?"—making a snatch at the inside of his hat, grasping at something, opening his hand, finding nothing in it, and then crying with a stupid stare—"No, you see, good folks, the devil of any devil is here!" Then again, when he returned to the stage, followed by an eager crowd, and in an imperious tone was ordered by his master to mount,—to see the comical jump he gave, alighting half upright, roaring with pretended pain, pressing his hip, declaring he had put out his collar bone, crying to his master to come and cure it, receiving a kick, springing up and making a somerset; thanking his master kindly for making him well; yet, the moment his back was turned, mocking him with wry faces; answering the doctor, whom I should have thought extremely witty, if Andrew had not been there, with jokes so apposite and whimsical as never failed to produce roars of laughter. All this was to me assuredly, "the feast of reason and the flow of soul!" As it was the first scene of the kind I had ever witnessed, so it was the most extatic. I think it by no means improbable, that an ardent love of the dramatic art took root in my mind from the accidents of that day.

CHAPTER IV

'There are short periods of my life, during which, when endeavouring to retrace them, I am surprised to find I can scarcely recollect any thing of what happened, and this was one of them. How we got from the Isle of Ely,—where we went,—what we did,—the reasons that induced my father and mother to forsake the business of pedlars,—whether he returned to London for a short time, and again sat down to what he called his trade, namely, that of making, or rather mending shoes,—are questions which I cannot answer. This interval, though not very long, must have been of some duration; for the first remarkable fact that presents itself to my mind, is the strong recollection I have of being at Coventry, walking with my little sister in my arms in a large desolate back yard, at the outskirts of the city. Through this yard, a deep open common sewer ran, into which my sister either sprang, or fell by accident, where she must almost instantly have been suffocated, had not I, instead of being terrified, and running to call for help, immediately thrown myself on the ground, and dragged her safely out. I ran, at once terrified and rejoiced, to tell my father and mother what had happened, and was rewarded by the praises I received from them for the good sense and intrepidity I had shewn. It has been my good fortune to have saved more lives than one, but this was the first.

'In and of Coventry itself, I remember several little traits and incidents. I was much taken with the virtue, beauty, and magnanimity of Lady Godiva:—the misfortune that befel peeping Tom, was a fine mark of divine justice; and I was equally delighted to think that all the people had bread enough, as I supposed, when the oppressive toll was taken off. Coventry Cross was then standing, and though greatly dilapidated, made no little impression on my imagination, as I walked round and round it, and gazed at its spiral forms, commensurate proportions, numerous little recesses and figures, though half destroyed, that suggested ideas of beauty, sanctity, and the events of past times. Not that I would have it supposed that these ideas passed individually and distinctly through the mind of an uninstructed boy, little more than eight years old, but the effect of them altogether was such as I have here described.

'My father, though active and of a strong constitution, was short, slight-built, and wholly unable to contend with men in general. But he was passionate, and free-spoken if he thought himself ill-used, and had thus given offence to a powerful, brutal rival in the market, by whom he was treated with great contempt, and threatened with personal chastisement. I well remember the grief and indignation I then felt that my father should be thus degraded; and that he, I, and all belonging to him, should be unable to redress his wrongs.

'This happened on a market-day; and I believe it was on the same day that my father, thinking me almost perished with the cold, gave me a pint of ale to drink, which so far inebriated me, that I was quite ashamed. My father himself was a man of such sobriety, that I had heard him often declare that he had never in his life been overcome with liquor. Besides, I loved religious books, and they all informed me, drunkenness was a great sin. I therefore took it very much to heart that I should so early have been guilty of a crime, of which he was entirely innocent. However, he consoled me by taking the blame upon himself for giving me more drink that I could be supposed able to bear.

'It was here that I saw a person of a very odd and almost unaccountable appearance. I could not discover whether he was young or old; for he seemed to be both. The size of his limbs, the form of his body, the colour of his hair and face, were such as might have belonged to a boy of eighteen; and to correspond with these he had something of sprightliness in his manner: but his gait and deportment were those of old age: he stooped in the shoulders, and he had the greatest number of small wrinkles in his face that I have ever seen. The reason why I mention many of these (in themselves perhaps insignificant) circumstances, is, that the inquiring reader may be able to trace the bent and progress of my mind, and how far I was prone to observation.

CHAPTER V

'Having been bred to an employment for which he was very ill-fitted, both from his physical and mental powers and propensities, the habit that became most rooted in, and most fatal to my father, was a fickleness of disposition, a thorough persuasion, after he had tried one means of providing for himself and family for a certain time, that he had discovered another far more profitable and secure. Steadiness of pursuit was a virtue at which he could never arrive: and I believe few men in the kingdom had in the course of their lives been the hucksters of so many small wares; or more enterprising dealers in articles of a halfpenny value.

'Different circumstances have fixed in my mind the recollection of many of the towns to which we went, and a variety of the articles of my father's traffic, but in all probability not a tenth part of either. I at this moment remember in particular, a market-day at Macclesfield in Cheshire; not so much from what we sold, though I believe it was some sort of wooden-ware, of which trenchers and spoons were in those days staple articles, as from a person that caught my attention there. This was a most robust and boisterous woman, more than middle-aged, with a very visible beard, and a deep base voice. I was never weary of listening to, looking at her, and watching all she said or did. I could scarcely think it possible there was such a woman.

'I should mention, that to carry on these itinerant trades, my father had begun with purchasing an ass, and bought more as he could; now and then increasing his store by the addition of a ragged poney, or a worn-out, weather-beaten Rozinante. In autumn he turned his attention to fruit, and conveyed apples and pears in hampers from villages to market-towns; among the latter of which I remember, were Tamworth, Newark-upon-Trent, and Hinckley. The bad nourishment I met with, the cold and wretched manner in which I was clothed, and the excessive weariness I endured in following these animals day after day, and being obliged to drive creatures perhaps still more weary than myself, were miseries much too great, and loaded my little heart with sorrows far too pungent ever to be forgotten. Bye roads and high roads were alike to be traversed, but the former far the oftenest, for they were then almost innumerable, and the state of them in winter would scarcely at present be believed. —Speaking of scantiness of diet, an incident happened to me which shews the great power of taste, or rather of imagination, over the appetite, and which ought to be treasured in the memory of those who endeavour to force the appetites of children. I was travelling after my father in Staffordshire near Wosely bridge, where a country-gentleman had a seat. I went into the house, whether alone or for what purpose I totally forget: but I well remember the fragrant steams of the kitchen, and the longing wishes they excited. As I was going away, a good-natured servant said, "Perhaps you are hungry, little boy?" To which, bashfully hanging my head, I answered, "Yes." "Well, then, stop a minute, I'll give you something very nice": and accordingly, a large bason of rich pease-soup was brought me, and a spoon. I had never eaten, nor perhaps heard of such a thing before: but the moment I smelt it, and applied it to my palate, I conceived such an excessive dislike to it, that though I felt ashamed, and made every effort I could, I found it impossible to swallow a spoonful. Some servants were by my side, and one of them asked, "What! don't you like it? Can't you eat it?" To which, perfectly abashed, and again hanging my head, I replied, "No." "Ha!" said one of them, "you are a dainty chap, however, I wonder who keeps you, or what it is you do like!" I made no reply, but, hungry as I was, and wretchedly disappointed, hurried away as fast as I could, to overtake my father. I should remark, that since I have grown up, pease-soup has always been a favourite dish with me: perhaps, accustomed as I had been from childhood to the plainest food, and empty as my stomach then was, this high-flavoured composition would unavoidably excite disgust.

'My father became by turns, a collector and vender of rags, a hardwareman, a dealer in buckles, buttons, and pewter-spoons; in short, a trafficker in whatever could bring gain. But there was one thing which fixed his attention longer than any other, and which therefore, I suppose he found the most lucrative; which was, to fetch pottery from the neighbourhood of Stone, in Staffordshire, and to hawk it through all the North of England. Of all other travelling, this was the most continual, the most severe, and the most intolerable.

Derbyshire, Cheshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire, the towns and cities of Birmingham, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Coventry, Derby, Burton-upon-Trent, Litchfield, Tamworth, Atherstone, Nuneaton, Lutterworth, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, nay, as far up as Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon, Daventry, Northampton, Newport-Pagnell, Banbury, (I well remember its delicious cakes); and on the east, Stamford in Lincolnshire, Grantham, and in short every place within possible reach, or where pottery might be sold, received visits from my father, the asses, and poor me.

'What became of my mother during these excursions, I do not accurately recollect, except that she was with us occasionally, as at Macclesfield for instance, where the woman with the beard and base voice so fixed my attention. She was also with us at Litchfield and Coventry. Most probably she was in general left at home, with her child or children.

'By home, I mean an old house half in ruins, about two miles on the north-east side of Rugeley, with a kitchen-garden, paddock, and croft, which afforded some scanty supplies to man and beast, when my father found it convenient, or thought proper to rest a little from his labours; but to me this house often became a den of misery. I was not yet nine years old, but I had a variety of employments. First, I was the messenger of the family to Rugeley, whither I took money and brought back delicious white bread, for which it was then famous, with such minor articles as were wanted. But when trusted by myself, I could not help loitering on the road, diverting myself with whatever caught my attention, and examining every new object with an idle, boyish curiosity, from which I derived little profit. So that a journey, which ought to have been performed in less than two hours, generally took me more than half a day. I knew the consequences, and had a kind of horror of them, yet could not resist, could not prevail upon myself to go strait forward; such was the united force of habit and curiosity.

'My father was alike extreme in his anger, and in his compassion. He used to beat me, pull my hair up by the roots, and drag me by the ears along the ground, till they ran with blood. Indeed my repeated faults were so unpardonable, that he could scarcely blame himself. Yet probably within an hour after he had exercised his severity upon me, he would break out into passionate exclamations of fondness, alarming himself lest he should some time or other do me a serious mischief, and declaring that rather than so, he would a thousand times prefer instant death.

'Chastisements like these were grievous, but they were by no means the whole of what I had to encounter. I know not how it happened, but at this early age I was entrusted with business rather like an adult than a child.

'Towards Litchfield, on the right, lay Cannock heath and town; and adjoining to this heath, on the left, there were coal-pits situated in a remarkably heavy clay country: (I speak from childish recollection, and may therefore expect to be pardoned, should I in description commit any local errors; as I have never been at Cannock, the coal-pits, or the heath, since that period). Desirous of employing his asses, yet averse to go himself (I know not for what reason) my father frequently sent me to these coal-pits to get a single ass loaded, and to drive him over the heath to Rugeley, there to find a customer for my coals. The article was so cheap, and so near, that the profits could be but very small, yet they were something. Had the weather been fine when I was sent on these errands, the task would not have been so difficult, nor the wonder so great; but at the time I was unfortunately sent there, I have a perfect recollection of deep ruts, of cattle, both asses and horses, unable to drag their legs through the clay, and of carts and waggons that were set fast in it. I do not mean that these accidents happened every day, but they were common to the place: and to poor helpless me, with a creature that could scarcely stand under its burthen, they were not less frequent than to others. When any body that could assist me happened to be near, I thought myself in luck; but if I was obliged to run from coal-pit to coal-pit, to request the man who turned the wheel to come and help me, the chance of compliance was little. I often got nothing but a surly curse and a denial; so till some unlooked-for accident brought me relief, there my loaded ass, sometimes heaving a groan at what he suffered, was obliged to stay.

'The most remarkable instance of this kind of distress may perhaps deserve recounting. One day, my ass had passed safely through the clay ruts and deep roads, and under my guidance had begun to ascend a hill we had to cross on Cannock heath on our way to Rugeley. The wind was very high; though while we were on low ground, I had never suspected its real force. But my apprehensions began to increase with our ascent, and when on the summit of the hill, nearly opposite to two clumps of trees, which are pictured to my imagination as they stood there at that time, it blew gust after gust, too powerful for the loaded animal to resist, and down it came. Through life I have always had a strong sense of the grief and utter despair I then felt. But what a little surprises me is, that I have no recollection whatever of the means by which I found relief, but rather of the naked and desolate place in which I was, and my inability to help myself. Could I have unloaded the ass, it would not have been much matter; but the coals were brought from the pits in such masses, that three of them were generally an ass-load; any one of which was usually beyond my strength. I have no doubt, however, but I got them by some means or other to Rugeley, and brought the money for them safe to my father, whom I could not help secretly accusing of insensibility, though that was the very reverse of his character.

'The coal-pits were situated on the extremity of an old forest, inhabited by large quantities of red deer. At these I always stopped to look: but what surprised and delighted me most was the noble stag; for to him the deer appeared insignificant. Him I often saw bounding along, eying objects without fear, and making prodigious leaps over obstacles that opposed his passage. In this free state, indeed, he cannot but excite our admiration.

'One little anecdote I must not omit. The reader will naturally suppose that from the time I began to travel the country with my father and mother, I had little leisure or opportunity to acquire any knowledge by reading. I was too much pressed by fatigue, hunger, cold, and nakedness. Still however I cannot but suppose, as well from my own propensity to obey the will of God, as from my father's wish to encourage my inclinations of this kind, that I continued to repeat my prayers and catechism morning and evening, and on Sundays to read the prayer-book and bible. At any rate, I had not forgot to read; for while we were at the house near Rugeley, by some means or other, the song of Chevy Chace came into my possession, which I read over with great delight at our fire-side. My father, who knew that my memory was tolerably retentive, and saw the great number of stanzas the ballad contained, said to me, "Well, Tom, can you get that song by heart?" - To this question I very readily answered, "yes." "In how long a time?"—"Why, you know, father, I have got such work for to-morrow, and what work you will set me for the following days, I can't tell; however, I can get it in three days." "What, perfectly?" "Yes." "Well, if you do that, I'll give you a halfpenny." Rejoiced at my father's generosity, "Oh then, never fear," said I. I scarcely need add, that my task was easily accomplished, and that I then had the valuable sum of a halfpenny at my own disposal.

CHAPTER VI

'There was a single instance in which I travelled on foot thirty miles in one day. Whether the miles were measured or computed, is a circumstance which I now forget: but the roads were so heavy, owing to a strong clay soil, that the last quarter of a mile I had to go, I was obliged to confess I could walk no farther, and I was carried on a countryman's shoulders. All those who heard of this, and knew how young, how slight of limb, and stunted in my growth I was, expressed their astonishment, and some their doubts. I think this happened before I was ten years of age.

'My father broke up his little establishment near Rugeley, and took me with him into Cheshire, but left me at a village two or three miles from Haslem, where I was intrusted to the care of an old woman, who kept a lodging house; and whom from the whole of her appearance, as well as her kindness to me, I always remembered with respect. On the evening of my arrival, but later, two travelling Irishmen came in, and were admitted as lodgers. My father had bargained with the old woman, that she was to provide for me: travellers, of course, who come in at sun-set, and depart at day-break, provide for themselves, or are obliged to be satisfied with what such barren abodes can supply. The Irishmen had provided a halfpenny roll between them; what they might have more I do not know. But my good old dame they noticed to be mashing up a plentiful supper of new milk and potatoes for me, a dish in which their hearts delighted. Whether it was contrivance, accident, or according to rule, I cannot say; we did not, however, sup in the presence of the old woman, but in the room in which we all three slept. No sooner were we here, and I had begun in imagination to devour my delicate mashed potatoes, than the Irishmen came up to me, patted my cheeks, told me what a pretty little boy I was, asked me my name, inquired who took care of me, and to what country I was going; and swore by the holy father they never in all their lives, saw so sweet a looking boy, and so compliant and good-tempered. "Do now," said one of them, "let me taste of your mashed potatoes." "Aye, and me too," said the other—"I *warrand* you don't much care about them! We now are a *dale* more used to them in Ireland: I'm sure you'll be very glad to make an exchange. Here now, here is a very fine half-penny roll, which is very nice *ating*, and which to be sure we bought for our own supper. To be sure, we should be fond enough of it, but we don't care about trifles; and as we have been used to *ate* potatoes all the days of our lives, and you English all like bread, why if you *plase*, my sweet compliable *fillow*, we will just make a little bit of a swap, and so we shall all *ate* our suppers heartily." The action followed the word; they took my potatoes, and gave me the dry roll: while I, totally disconcerted, and not a little overawed by the wildness of my fellow-lodgers' looks, the strangeness of their brogue, their red whiskers, dark beards, carotty wigs, and sparkling black eyes, said not a word, but quietly submitted, though I thoroughly regretted the dainty supper I had lost, and saw them devour it with an aching heart.

'Whenever I write dialogues like these, it is not to be supposed that I pretend to repeat word for word what was said: after the lapse of so many years, such a pretension would on the face of it be absurd. But I do on all such occasions pretend to give a true picture of the impressions that still remain on my mind, to express the tone and spirit in which the words were spoken, and in general to repeat a part of the words themselves.—I cannot too seriously declare that I write these memoirs with a conscious desire to say nothing but the pure truth, the chief intention of them being to excite an ardent emulation in the breasts of youthful readers; by shewing them how difficulties may be endured, how they may be overcome, and how they may at last contribute, as a school of instruction, to bring forth hidden talent.

CHAPTER VII

'NEXT morning early the Irishmen pursued their journey; and when my father returned, I told him in the hearing of our well-meaning old hostess how I had been tricked out of my supper. They immediately joined in reviling the whole Irish nation, concluding as "the great vulgar and the small" generally do on such occasions, that these two fellows, with the cunning kind of robbery they had committed, exhibited a faithful picture of Ireland and Irishmen. 'Till corrected either by great experience, or conscientious inquiry, the human mind has an almost invincible propensity, when any vice which most excites disgust or contempt is remarked in an individual of a particular country, to affirm that it could belong to no one else, and to ascribe it as a general characteristic to the nation at large.

'I believe that my father's intentions, when we left Cheshire, were to seclude himself for a time, by working at the shoe-making business; and that for this purpose he took a circuitous route, with a determination to settle at whatever market-town he should find there was a probability of getting employment. This pursuit led us to Northwich, Knutsford, Congleton, Macclesfield, Sheffield, Chappel in le Frith, in which country the scenery astonished me, and where I was particularly struck with three conic barren rocks, which, I remarked to my father, were like three sugar-loaves. We also went to Buxton, Bakewell, Chesterfield, and Mansfield, where sickness detained us for a time. This sickness was a mutual and dangerous fever, which we caught, either by our being unable to reach a lodging-house, or to pay for a lodging, and by our sleeping, in consequence, under a damp hedge, an imprudence that had nearly proved fatal to us; nor have I ever ceased at intervals to feel its effects. Some time after our recovery from the fever, I was seized by an asthma, which became so violent, that it was only occasionally I dared venture from the house. I can give no account how we were maintained, while we were at Mansfield, nor of the means by which we recovered; but I have a perfect picture before me, of a decent, cleanly house, good attendance, and countenances that were kind and cheerful. At the same time, I have no recollection of conceiving ourselves indebted to charity, or of oeing under any apprehensions of future want; so that I can hardly suppose that the circumstance which first occasioned our illness, arose from pecuniary distress.

'After we had recovered sufficient strength, our next remove was to Nottingham, where we lodged in a house not far from the Park, with the Castle in view, and the brook that winds along the low grounds beneath the height on which it is built. A game which I do not remember to have seen played any where else, and which afforded me no little pleasure, was that of two men having each a round bright ball of iron or steel, to which they had the art of giving an elastic right line direction along the pathway through the Park; and which, if I am not mistaken, they called playing at long bowls, he who could first attain the goal being the winner. Spell and null, bandy, prison-bars, and other field games, in the address or the activity of which my little heart delighted, long before I was permitted to be a partaker in them, were here among the diversions of the summer evening.

'In many parts, Nottingham is, as I then thought it, a very fine town. To me, who had seen so many, its market-place seemed to claim an undoubted and high superiority. Situated on a gently rising ground, that soon becomes dry after showers, surrounded by inns, shops, and other buildings, and well supplied with almost every article, it is among the largest, most convenient, and handsomest in England. A little beyond it were two remarkable inns, the White Lion, and the Blackamoor's Head; each possessed of vast cellarage, wines of I know not what age, with viands, beds, and other conveniences, such as it gave me the greatest satisfaction to hear described.

'One of our four principal rivers, the noble Trent, flows through the meadows below the town, at no very great distance. The scenery round it, to my boyish apprehension, was grand. When the day and the stream were clear, I have often taken a particular pleasure in watching the shoals of fish of the smaller kind in which it abounded, or in now and then catching a glimpse of some of greater magnitude, or in seeing them brought on shore by the dexterous angler. A village, called the Hermitage, lay on its banks, and thither I delighted to walk, because it was connected with circumstances, which interested my imagination.—Here, as well as in other places in the outskirts of the town, there were houses cut in the rock; and I could not but fancy them to have been formerly inhabited by a venerable and holy brotherhood of Hermits. These houses were indeed to me objects of the greatest curiosity. I could never cease admiring that men should persevere in hewing themselves out such habitations, and that they should turn a thing so barren to so much use and profit; for these rocks were in fact high banks of sand-stone, and on the top of them, that is, on the roofs of their houses, each man had his garden.

'I walked much about at Nottingham in company with my father, to whom I was very eager to communicate all my juvenile pleasures, and of whom I also made constant inquiries with respect to the objects we saw. He, however, could oftener make conjectures than give information. I imagine his reason for taking me thus into the air, was, as he hoped, to arrest the progress of the asthma which daily increased, and became alarming; for there were times when I could not walk above a few yards without standing still to recover breath. Such medical people as my father could obtain access to, were consulted; but the general opinion was that unless youth and growth should relieve me, the disease was for life. An intelligent surgeon happened to think otherwise: he entertained hopes, he said, provided an issue was made, and carefully kept open on the inside of each leg below the knee. My father accepted his offer to perforate the skin, and direct me in dressing the issues; for to my known prudence this care was readily committed. The success of the remedy equalled the expectations of the surgeon. The cure, aided no doubt by my youth and cheerful temperament, was progressively visible from week to week, and my joy and thankfulness to my medical guide were great. Whoever he was, I certainly owe him much; but I have forgotten his name. This must have happened in the year 1756 or 7, but I believe the latter.

CHAPTER VIII

'Public sights, even though cruel, have been, through all ages, the delight of the herd of mankind. The sessions were just over, and a malefactor, who had been sentenced to death, was left by the judge for execution. My father proposed that we should accompany the crowd, and see what was to be seen. To this I consented; we followed the cart to the gallows which stood at some distance from the town; and by talking with each other, listening to remarks that were made, some of them charitable, others tainted with a revengeful spirit, and by frequently stopping to observe the agitation of the poor wretch whose life was so soon to cease, I was thrown into a very pensive state of mind. However, taking my father by the hand, I patiently waited the awful moment when the cap was drawn over the culprit's eyes, and he was suddenly lifted into the air. Here his convulsive struggles, to my young and apprehensive imagination, were intolerable: I soon turned my eyes away, unable to look any longer; and my father seeing the pain I was in, said, "Come, Tom, let us go." "Oh yes, yes, father, as fast as we can," was my reply. The effect on my mind was such, that I made, as I suppose, the first fixed resolution of my life, and declared it in a tone that denoted how determined I was,—"Never again, while I live," said I, "will I go, and see a malefactor put to death." Five or six and twenty years afterwards, I thought it an act of duty to change this determination when I was first at Paris in the year 1783. Through life, however, when hanging, and the various ways in which men exterminate each other, have been talked of, I have rarely, if ever, forgotten the poor dying culprit of Nottingham.

'It should seem that men have at all times had the good sense to contrast their melancholy and often disgusting institutions, with others of an opposite tendency; and that seldom fail in the very nature of them to revive the sickening heart, and give it animation and delight.

'The time of Nottingham Races drew near. My father was a great lover of horses, as I have said; and from his discourse, as well as the little I had seen of these noble animals, I was eager to become better acquainted with them. My father recapitulated the different places at which he had seen horses run, recounted the names of the famous winners he had known, and filled up the picture with the accidents common on such occasions, the amazing cunning of sharpers, the punishments inflicted on some of their detected rogueries; the cries of the betting chair, the tumult of the crowd when the horses were running, the danger of being too near the course, with the difficulty of keeping it clear, the multitude of gaming and drinking booths, and all that variety of delightful commotion which was calculated to gratify my boyish fancy. The whole scene was like enchantment; and all my wishes were now centered in its being realised.

'Ten days or a fortnight before the time, straggling horses for the different plates began to drop in; and of course to take their morning and evening exercise on the course, where they might be seen. This was a pleasure not to be neglected either by me or my father. I was delighted with the fineness of their limbs, their glossy coats; and not a little amused, when following them from exercise to the stable, if I were but allowed to take a peep, and see how their body-clothes were managed, how the currying and brushing of them was performed, their high straw beds prepared, their long hay carefully chosen, and their oats sifted and re-sifted. Every thing about a race-horse is precious: but I pitied them for being so much stinted in their food, and especially when my father told me it must daily decrease, and that the night before they started they must fast.

'But the great and glorious part which Nottingham held in the annals of racing this year, arose from the prize of the King's plate, which was to be contended for by the two horses which every body I heard speak considered as undoubtedly the best in England, and perhaps equal to any that had ever been known, Childers alone excepted. Their names were, Careless and Atlas. Careless, who had been bred by a worthy and popular Baronet of the county (I forget his name) was the decided favourite of every man in Nottingham, gentle or simple. The prowess and equal, if not superior, merit of Atlas, were very boldly asserted by strangers, and particularly by jockeys, betters, and men of the turf. If I do not mistake, Atlas was the property of, and bred by the Duke of Devonshire. However, he had received a previous defeat in running against Careless; and this defeat the men of Nottingham considered as little less than a certainty of future victory. The opposite party affirmed that Atlas, being a remarkably powerful horse (I think seventeen hands high), had not then attained his full force. There was a story in circulation concerning him, which if true deserved to be remembered. He was a full bred horse out of the Duke's own stud, and consequently was intended for training: but being unwieldy when foaled, and as he grew up becoming still more so, he was rejected on account of his size and clumsiness, and banished to the cart breed. Among these inferiors he remained, till by some accident, either of playfulness or fright, several of them started together, and the vast advantage of Atlas in speed happening to be noticed, it was then thought proper by the grooms to restore him to his blood companions.

'Of those who in the least amused or busied themselves with such affairs, Careless and Atlas occupied the whole discourse. Many people who seemed to reason plausibly enough on the subject, affirmed that if any thing lost the race to Careless, it would be the inferior skill of his rider, by whom neither the ground nor the powers of the horse would be well economized; he was merely the groom of a country gentleman. When the race was over, these accusations were vociferated with wearisome reiteration.

'On the appointed day, however, they both started for the king's plate; and I believe there was scarcely a heart on the race-course, that did not swell with hope and fear. As for my own little one, it was all in rapture for Careless. He was so finely made, his coat was so bright, his eye so beaming, his limbs so animated, and every motion seemed so evidently to declare, "I can fly, if I please," that I could not endure the thought of his being conquered. Alas for the men of Nottingham, conquered he was! I forget whether it was at two or three heats, but there was many an empty purse on that night, and many a sorrowful heart.

CHAPTER IX

'These different incidents had raised a strong desire in my mind to be better acquainted with a subject that had given to me, and as I thought to every body, so much emotion, and I began to consider what might be done. At that time I was rather a burthen to my father than a help. I believe I assisted him a little in the mending of shoes, but my asthma till very lately, as well as my youth, had prevented my making much progress. At one time indeed I had been persuaded, though much against my will, to become apprentice to a stocking-weaver; but this, I forget how, broke off, at which I was very glad: I did not like stocking-weaving. The question now occurred to me, whether it would not be possible to procure the place of a stable-boy, at Newmarket. I was at this time in point of clothing in a very mean, not to say ragged condition, and in other respects, was not much better off. The stable-boys I saw at Nottingham, were healthy, clean, well fed, well clothed, and remarkable rather for their impudence, than seeming to live under any kind of fear or hardship. Except their impudence, I liked every thing else I saw about them; and concluded that if I could obtain so high a situation as this, I should be very fortunate.

'These reflections preyed so much upon my mind, that I was at last induced to mention them to my father; and he having a predilection for every thing belonging to a horse, and therefore a high respect for this, the noblest state of that animal's existence, readily fell into my views, and only feared they could not be accomplished.

He resolved however that trial should be made; and after inquiring among the Jockeys, thought it advisable to apply to a Mr. Woodcock, who kept stables four or five miles from Newmarket, where he trained horses entrusted to his care. Mr. Woodcock examined me, asked my age, found I was light of weight, and, as I suppose, liking the answers I gave to his questions, to our very great joy, agreed to take me upon trial. In the course of my life, there have been several changes, that each in their turn, greatly affected my spirits, and gave me advantages far beyond what I had ever before enjoyed: of these gradual elevations, this was the first. I should now be somebody. I should be entrusted with the management of one of that race of creatures that were the most admired and beloved by me: I should be well clothed, wear a livery, which would shew I belonged to one of the great: I should not only have food enough, but of that kind which was highly relishing to the appetite of youth; and, in addition to all this, should receive an annual stipend. I jumped as it were, from a precarious and mean existence, where I could not tell what worse might happen, into a permanent and agreeable employment. I had only to learn to ride, and perform the duties of a stable-boy, of which I had no fear, for I supposed them far less difficult than I afterwards found they were.

'The grooms that reside at, and in the vicinity of this famed town, are all more or less, acquainted with each other; and on Mr. Woodcock's recommendation, I was put under the care of Jack Clarke, who lived with Captain Vernon, he having luckily a led horse, which I was to mount. The day of parting with my father, and of beginning our journey, was an anxious one. He could not too emphatically repeat the few well meant precepts he had so often given me, nor I too earnestly assure him, I would love and obey him all my life. Notwithstanding his severity, he was passionately fond of me, my heart entered into the same feelings, and there was great and unfeigned affection between us.

CHAPTER X

'As is the custom in travelling with trained horses, we set off early, and walked without hurry. When we stopped to breakfast, the plenty of excellent cold beef, bread and cheese, with the best table-beer, and as much as we pleased, gave me a foretaste of the fortunate change I had made. This indeed exceeded my utmost expectations, —I was entering upon a new existence,—was delighted, full of hope, and cheerful alacrity, yet too timid to be presumptuous. Clarke, being a good-tempered lad, and seeing me happy, attempted to play me no tricks whatever. On the contrary, he gave me all the caution and advice he could, to guard me against being drawn into the common-place deceptions, most of them nasty, many of them unhealthy, and all of them tending to make the poor tyro, a common laughing-stock, uniformly practised by the resident boys, upon every new comer. I do not recollect one-half these tricks: but that with which they begin, if I do not mistake, is to persuade their victim, that the first thing necessary for a well-trained stable-boy, is to borrow as many waistcoats as he can, and in the morning after he has dressed and fed his horse, to put them all on, take a race of perhaps two or three miles, return home, strip himself stark naked, and immediately be covered up in the hot dung-hill; which, they assure him, is the method the grooms take when they sweat themselves down to ride a race. Should the poor fellow follow their directions, they conclude the joke with pail-fulls of cold water, which stand ready, to throw over him.

'Another of their diversions used to be that of hunting the owl, which is already very whimsically described in a book of much humour, and tolerably well-known, called Tim Bobbin's Lancashire dialect. To catch the owl, is to persuade a booby that there is an owl found at roost in the corner of a barn; that a ladder must be placed against a hole, through which, when the persons within shall be pleased to hoot and hunt him, he must necessarily fly, as the barn door is shut, and every other outlet closed: that the boy chosen to catch the owl must mount this ladder on the outside, and the purblind animal, they say, will fly directly into his hat. When the owl-catcher is persuaded to all this, and mounts to his post, the game begins: hallooing and absurd noises are made; the fellows within divert themselves with laughing at what is to come, and pretending to call to one another to drive the owl from this place to that; while two or three of them approach nearer and nearer to the hole, when they discharge the contents of their full tubs and pails on the head of the expecting owl-catcher, who is generally precipitated from his ladder to some soft, but not very agreeable preparation below.

'Clarke warned me against several other of the games at which I should be invited to play; in most of which there was some whim, but a great deal more of that dirty wit in which ill-bred boys are known to delight. Clarke, however, did me this essential service, that he not only taught me to avoid all the snares he mentioned, but rendered me so wary, that all the time I was among this mischievous crew, I was never once entrapped by them. At this they occasionally expressed great wonder; perhaps, had they known the secret, they would have taken their revenge on Clarke.

'The weather through the whole of our journey was fine, the ride highly agreeable, and the instruction and information I received from Clarke, made it still more pleasant to me. The only place I can distinctly remember having passed through and made a short stay at, was Huntingdon.

CHAPTER XI

'As I have said, Mr. Woodcock resided in the vicinity of Newmarket, at the distance of three or four miles; and to the house where he lived Clarke immediately took me, gave up his charge, and we parted, I believe with mutual good-will: at least my feelings towards him were grateful and friendly. As a thing of course, there must have been stables belonging to the house of Mr. Woodcock, but I cannot recollect what train he had under him; and to say the truth, I cannot fix upon any one figure, man, boy, or animal, except a grey filly, on the back of which I was put, and which I was entrusted with the care of.

'I doubt if Mr. Woodcock was at home on my arrival. His family was small, and had the air of being genteel. It consisted of himself, his wife, and their daughter, who was about eleven years old. All that I can now recollect of Mrs. and Miss Woodcock, is, having seen them very neatly dressed in white, that the mother assumed a very superior but obliging manner, and that I stood much in awe of her. Trees were thinly scattered to some distance round the house: the parlour was very neat, and rather spacious. In this I received one of those early lessons in moral honesty, which produce a greater effect on the mind of a child, or even of a youth, than is generally supposed. One afternoon, the tea-things and sugar-bason being set out in the parlour before Mrs. and Miss Woodcock had come down, I was passing the door, and that delicious bait of boyhood, a fine lump of sugar, caught my eye. I looked, considered, looked again, saw nobody, found it irresistible, and venturing step by step on tiptoe, seized the tempting prize, thinking myself secure: but as I turned back to hasten away with it, the first object that struck me was a young gentleman, stretched either on a chair or sopha behind the door, with a book in his hand, a look directed to me, and a smile on his countenance. I cannot express the shame I felt: but I immediately returned the sugar to its place, cast down my eyes, and slunk away, most heartily mortified, especially when the young gentleman's smile broke out into a laugh.

'I forgot to mention, though it will easily be supposed, that when I entered on my new profession, my dress was changed, and I was made to look something like a stable-boy.

'Miss Woodcock was a very neat little girl, and it somehow happened, though I know not by what means, that I soon got rather in favour with her. She would whisper with me when we met near the house, chide me if she saw what she thought an impropriety, and once or twice condescended to be half or quite angry with me, while I did all in my power to please her. These trifling advances, however, which spoke rather the innocence of the age, than the intention of the mind, were soon put an end to by an accident that had nearly proved fatal to me.

'Perfectly a novice as I was, though I could sit with seeming safety on a quiet horse, I neither knew how to keep a firm seat, nor suddenly to seize one, and I was almost certain of being thrown if any thing that was but a little violent or uncommon happened. I was walking the dark grey filly quite a foot-pace in the forest, when in an instant something startled her, and made her spring aside: by which I was not only unseated and thrown, but unfortunately for me, my foot hung in the stirrup; her fright was increased, she began to kick and plunge violently, and I received a blow in the stomach, which, though it freed me from the stirrup, left me, as was supposed, for no inconsiderable time, dead. Somebody, I imagine, was riding with me, for the alarm was soon given: I was taken up, carried home, treated with great humanity, and by bleeding and other medical means, signs of life at length became visible. All that I myself recollect of a circumstance so very serious, and so very near being mortal, was, that I was thrown, kicked, and dreadfully frightened; that some time afterwards I found myself very ill in bed, in a very neat chamber, and that I was spoken to and attended with great kindness till my recovery.

'This accident, however, put an end to my jockeyship in the service of Mr. Woodcock: he discovered a little too late, that the dark grey filly and I could not be trusted safely together. But though he turned me away, he did not desert me. He recommended me to the service of a little deformed groom, remarkably long in the fork, I think of the name of Johnstone, who was esteemed an excellent rider, and had a string of no less than thirteen famous horses, the property of the Duke of Grafton, under his care. This was acknowledged to be a service of great repute: but the shrewd little groom soon discovered that I had all my trade to learn, and I was again dismissed.

'After this new disappointment, I felt perhaps a more serious alarm than is usual with boys at such an age. For, independently of natural sensibility, I had seen so much of the world, had so often been intrusted with its petty affairs, depended so much upon my ability to act for myself, and had been so confident in my assurances to my father that I ran no risk in venturing alone into the world, that my fears were not trifling when I found myself so far from him, thrown out of place, and convicted of being unable to perform the task I had so inconsiderately undertaken. Mr. Johnstone told me I must endeavour to get a place, but that for his part he could say little in my favour; however, he would suffer me to remain a few days among the boys. My despondency was the greater, because, the morning before, when a horse that I was riding shook himself in his saddle, as horses are sometimes observed to do, I fell from his back as much terrified as if he had been rearing, plunging, and kicking. To hardy grooms, and boys that delight in playing the braggart, this was a truly ridiculous instance of cowardice, and was repeated with no little malignity and laughter.

CHAPTER XII

'The unforeseen relief, that has been given to misfortune under circumstances apparently quite hopeless, has frequently been remarked, and not seldom affirmed to be an incontestible proof of a particular providence.

'I know not where I got the information, nor how, but in the very height of my distress, I heard that Mr. John Watson, training and riding groom to Captain Vernon, a gentleman of acute notoriety on the turf, and in partnership with the then Lord March, the present Duke of Queensbury, was in want of, but just then found it difficult to procure a stable-boy. To make this pleasing intelligence still more welcome, the general character of John Watson was, that, though he was one of the first grooms in Newmarket, he was remarkable for being good-tempered: yet the manner in which he disciplined his boys, though mild, was effectual, and few were in better repute. One consequence of this, however, was, that, if any lad was dismissed by John Watson, it was not easy for him to find a place.

'With him Jack Clarke lived, the lad with whom I came from

Nottingham: this was another fortunate circumstance, and contributed to inspire me with confidence. My present hopes were so strongly contrasted with my late fears, that they were indeed enviable. To speak for once in metaphor, I had been as one of those who walk in the shadow of the valley of death: an accidental beam of the sun broke forth, and I had a beatific view of heaven.

'It was no difficult matter to meet with John Watson: he was so attentive to stable-hours, that, except on extraordinary occasions, he was always to be found. Being first careful to make myself look as much like a stable-boy as I could, I came at the hour of four (the summer hour for opening the afternoon stables, giving a slight feed of oats, and going out to evening exercise), and ventured to ask if I could see John Watson. The immediate answer was in the affirmative. John Watson came, looked at me with a serious, but good-natured, countenance, and accosted me first with, "Well, my lad, what is your business? I suppose I can guess; you want a place?"—"Yes, Sir."—"Who have you lived with?"—"Mr. Woodcock, on the forest: one of your boys, Jack Clarke, brought me with him from Nottingham." "How came you to leave Mr. Woodcock?"—"I had a sad fall from an iron grey filly, that almost killed me."—"That is bad indeed!—and so you left him?"—"He turned me away, Sir."—"That is honest: I like your speaking the truth. So you are come from him to me?" At this question I cast my eyes down, and hesitated, then fearfully answered, "No, Sir."—"No! what, change masters twice in so short a time?"—"I can't help it, Sir, if I am turned away." This last answer made him smile. "Where are you now, then?"—"Mr. Johnstone gave me leave to stay with the boys a few days." "That is a good sign. I suppose you mean little Mr. Johnstone at the other end of the town?"—"Yes, Sir."—"Well, as you have been so short a time in the stables, I am not surprised he should turn you away: he would have every body about him as clever as himself, they must all know their business thoroughly. However they must learn it somewhere. I will venture to give you a trial, but I must first inquire your character of my good friends, Woodcock and Johnstone. Come to-morrow morning at nine; and you shall have an answer."

'It may well be supposed I did not forget the appointment; and a fortunate one I found it, for I was accepted on trial at four pounds or guineas a year, with the usual livery clothing. My station was immediately assigned me. Here was a remarkably quiet three years old colt, lately from the discipline of the breaker; and of him I was ordered to take charge, instructed by one of the upper boys in every thing that was to be done, and directed to back him and keep pace with the rest, when they went to exercise, only taking care to keep a strait line, and to walk, canter, and gallop the last. Fortunately for me his temper appeared to be so quiet (for he had been put into full training at an early age), that I found not the least difficulty in managing him. My reputation, therefore, among the boys, which is an essential circumstance, suffered no stain.

'I ought to mention, that though I have spoken of Mr. Johnstone, and may do of more Misters among the grooms, it is only because I have forgotten their christian names: for, to the best of my recollection, when I was at Newmarket, it was the invariable practice to denominate each groom by his christian and surname, unless any one happened to possess some peculiarity that marked him. For instance, I remember a little man in years, grown timid from age, but otherwise supposed to be the best rider in England, and remarkable for his knowledge of almost every race-course, whose name, I think, was William Cheevers; and of whom it was the custom to speak, by calling him Old Will, The Old One, and the like. I mention this, as it may be now or hereafter, a distinctive mark of the changes of manners. I know not what appellations are given to grooms at Newmarket at the present day, but at the time I speak of, if any grooms had been called Misters, my master would certainly have been among the number; and his constant appellation by every body, except his own boys who called him John, was simply John Watson.

'With respect to me, his conduct seems to shew that he understood my character better than the grooms who had judged of it before: as I did not long ride a quiet colt at the tail of the string (on whose back he soon put a new-comer), but had a dun horse, by no means a tame or safe one, committed to my care. Instead of timidity, he must have remarked various traits of courage in me, before he would have ventured on this step. In corroboration of this I may cite the following proof. I continued to ride the dun horse through the winter. It was John Watson's general practice to exercise his horses over the flat, and up Cambridge hill on the west side of Newmarket; but the rule was not invariable. One wintry day he ordered us up to the Bury hills. It mizzled a very sharp sleet, the wind became uncommonly cutting, and Dun, the horse I rode, being remarkable for a tender skin, found the wind and the sleet, which blew directly up his nostrils, so very painful, that it suddenly made him outrageous. He started from the rank in which he was walking, tried to unseat me, endeavoured to set off full speed, and when he found he could not master me so as to get head, began to rear, snorted most violently, threw out behind, plunged, and used every mischievous exertion, of which the muscular powers of a blood horse are capable.

I, who felt the uneasiness he suffered before his violence began, being luckily prepared, sat firm, as steady and upright, as if this had been his usual exercise. John Watson was riding beside his horses, and a groom, I believe it was old Cheevers, broke out into an exclamation —"By God, John, that is a fine lad!" "Aye, aye," replied Watson, highly satisfied, "you will find some time or other there are few in Newmarket that will match him." To have behaved with true courage, and to meet with applause like this, especially from John Watson, was a triumph, such as I could at this time have felt in no other way with the same sweet satisfaction. My horsemanship had been seen by all the boys,—my praises had been heard by them all.

'It will not be amiss here to remark that boys with strait legs, small calves, and knees that project but little, seldom become excellent riders. I, on the contrary, was somewhat bow-legged, I had then the custom of turning in my toes, and my knees were protuberant. I soon learned that the safe hold for sitting steady was to keep the knee and the calf of the leg strongly pressed against the side of the animal that endeavours to unhorse you: and as little accidents afford frequent occasions to remind the boys of this rule, it becomes so rooted in the memory of the intelligent, that their danger is comparatively trifling.

'Of the temperaments and habits of blood horses there are great varieties, and those very strongly contrasted. The majority of them are playful, but their gambols are dangerous to the timid or unskilful. They are all easily and suddenly alarmed, when any thing they do not understand forcibly catches their attention, and they are then to be feared by the bad horseman, and carefully guarded against by the good. Very serious accidents have happened to the best. But, besides their general disposition to playfulness, there is a great propensity in them to become what the jockeys call vicious. High-bred, hot in blood, exercised, fed, and dressed so as to bring that heat to perfection, their tender skins at all times subject to a sharp curry-comb, hard brushing, and when they take sweats, to scraping with wooden instruments, it cannot be but that they are frequently and exceedingly irritated. Intending to make themselves felt and feared, they will watch their opportunity to bite, stamp, or kick; I mean those among them that are vicious. Tom, the brother of Jack Clarke, after sweating a grey horse that belonged to Lord March, with whom he lived, while he was either scraping or dressing him, was seized by the animal by the shoulder, lifted from the ground, and carried two or three hundred yards before the horse loosened his hold. Old Forester, a horse that belonged to Captain Vernon all the while I remained at Newmarket, was obliged to be kept apart, and being foundered, to live at grass, where he was confined to a close paddock. Except Tom Watson, a younger brother of John, he would suffer no lad to come near him: if in his paddock, he would run furiously at the first person that approached, and if in the stable, would kick and assault every one within his reach. Horses of this kind seem always to select their favourite boy. Tom Watson, indeed, had attained to man's estate, and in his brother's absence, which was rare, acted as superintendent. Horses, commonly speaking, are of a friendly and generous nature; but there are anecdotes of the malignant and savage ferocity of some, that are scarcely to be credited: at least many such are traditional at Newmarket.

'Of their friendly disposition towards their keepers, there is a trait known to every boy that has the care of any one of them, which ought not to be omitted. The custom is to rise very early, even between two and three in the morning, when the days lengthen. In the course of the day, horses and boys have much to do. About half after eight, perhaps, in the evening, the horse has his last feed of oats, which he generally stands to enjoy in the centre of his smooth, carefully made bed of clean long straw, and by the side of him the weary boy will often lie down: it being held as a maxim, a rule without exception, that were he to lie even till morning, the horse would never lie down himself, but stand still, careful to do his keeper no harm. I should add, however, that the boy must keep awake, not for fear of the horse, but of the mischievous disposition of his comrades. Should sleep happen to overcome him, some lad will take one of those tough ashen plants with which they ride, and measuring his aim, strike him with all his force, and endeavour to make the longest wale he possibly can, on the leg of the sleeper. I remember to have been so punished once, when the blow, I concluded, was given by Tom Watson, as I thought no other boy in the stable could have made so large a wale: it reached from the knee to the instep, and was of a finger's breadth.

CHAPTER XIII

'There are few trades or professions, each of which has not a uniform mode of life peculiar to it, subject only to such slight variations as are incidental and temporary. This observation is particularly applicable to the life of a stable-boy.

'All the boys in the stable rise at the same hour, from half-past two in spring, to between four and five in the depth of winter. The horses hear them when they awaken each other, and neigh, to denote their eagerness to be fed. Being dressed, the boy begins with carefully clearing out the manger, and giving a feed of oats, which he is obliged no less carefully to sift. He then proceeds to dress the litter; that is, to shake the bed on which the horse has been lying, remove whatever is wet or unclean, and keep the remaining straw in the stable for another time. The whole stables are then thoroughly swept, the few places for fresh air are kept open, the great heat of the stable gradually cooled, and the horse, having ended his first feed, is roughly cleaned and dressed. In about half an hour after they begin, or a little better, the horses have been rubbed down, and re-clothed, saddled, each turned in his stall, then bridled, mounted, and the whole string goes out to morning exercise; he that leads being the first: for each boy knows his place.

'Except by accident, the race-horse never trots. He must either walk or gallop; and in exercise, even when it is the hardest, the gallop begins slowly and gradually, and increases till the horse is nearly at full speed. When he has galloped half a mile, the boy begins to push him forward, without relaxation, for another half-mile. This is at the period when the horses are in full exercise, to which they come by degrees. The boy that can best regulate these degrees among those of light weight, is generally chosen to lead the gallop; that is, he goes first out of the stable, and first returns.

'In the time of long exercise, this is the first *brushing gallop*. A brushing gallop signifies that the horses are nearly at full speed before it is over, and it is commonly made at last rather up hill. Having all pulled up, the horses stand some two or three minutes, and recover their wind; they then leisurely descend the hill and take a long walk; after which they are brought to water. But in this, as in every thing else (at least as soon as long exercise begins), every thing to them is measured. The boy counts the number of times the horse swallows when he drinks, and allows him to take no more gulps than the groom orders, the fewest in the hardest exercise, and one horse more or less than another, according to the judgment of the groom.—After watering, a gentle gallop is taken, and after that, another walk of considerable length; to which succeeds the second and last brushing gallop, which is by far the most severe. When it is over, another pause thoroughly to recover their wind is allowed them, their last walk is begun, the limits of which are prescribed, and it ends in directing their ride homewards.

'The morning's exercise often extends to four hours, and the evening's to much about the same time. Being once in the stable, each lad begins his labour. He leads the horse into his stall, ties him up, rubs down his legs with straw, takes off his saddle and body clothes; curries him carefully, then with both curry-comb and brush, never leaves him till he has thoroughly cleaned his skin, so that neither spot nor wet, nor any appearance of neglect may be seen about him. The horse is then reclothed, and suffered to repose for some time, which is first employed in gratifying his hunger, and recovering from his weariness. All this is performed, and the stables are once more shut up, about nine o'clock.

'Accustomed to this life, the boys are very little overcome by fatigue, except that early in the morning they may be drowsy. I have sometimes fallen slightly asleep at the beginning of the first brushing gallop. But if they are not weary, they are hungry, and they make themselves ample amends for all they have done. Nothing perhaps can exceed the enjoyment of a stable-boy's breakfast: what then may not be said of mine, who had so long been used to suffer hunger, and so seldom found the means of satisfying it? Our breakfast consisted of new milk, or milk porridge, then the cold meat of the preceding day, most exquisite Gloucester cheese, fine white bread, and concluded with plentiful draughts of table-beer. All this did not overload the stomach, or in the least deprive me of my youthful activity, except that like others I might sometimes take a nap for an hour, after so small a portion of sleep.

'For my own part, so total and striking was the change which had taken place in my situation, that I could not but feel it very sensibly. I was more conscious of it than most boys would have been, and therefore not a little satisfied. The former part of my life had most of it been spent in turmoil, and often in singular wretchedness. I had been exposed to every want, every weariness, and every occasion of despondency, except that such poor sufferers become reconciled to, and almost insensible of suffering, and boyhood and beggary are fortunately not prone to despond. Happy had been the meal where I had enough; rich to me was the rag that kept me warm; and heavenly the pillow, no matter what, or how hard, on which I could lay my head to sleep. Now I was warmly clothed, nay, gorgeously, for I was proud of my new livery, and never suspected that there was disgrace in it; I fed voluptuously, not a prince on earth perhaps with half the appetite, and never-failing relish; and instead of being obliged to drag through the dirt after the most sluggish, obstinate, and despised among our animals, I was mounted on the noblest that the earth contains, had him under my care, and was borne by him over hill and dale, far outstripping the wings of the wind. Was not this a change, such as might excite reflection even in the mind of a boy!

'Boys, when at full liberty, and thus kept in health and exercise, are eager at play. The games most common at Newmarket, were fives, spell and null, marbles, chuck-farthing, and spinning tops, at which, as well as marbles and fives, I excelled. Another game called holes, was occasionally played by a few of the boys. This was a game of some little study, and was much delighted in by the shepherd boys and men, who tended their flocks on that vast plain (as then it was) on which Newmarket stood. Three squares were cut in the earth, one within the other, in each side of which were three holes. Each antagonist had nine warriors or bits of stick to combat the opposing nine. What the rules of the game were, I have forgotten; but I believe the most essential of them was, that he was the victor who could imprison his adversary's men, or leave them no further space to move in. If the choice of the move were given, I, and other good players, knew how to win at this game with certainty. Till I discovered the secret, I was greatly devoted to the game.

'In order to have fair play allowed me at these different games, I had my little infant labours of Hercules to perform; or, to speak more properly and plainly, to fight my way, and convince all the boys of my own age, I was not to be cowed by them. All boys are wranglers; and out of this propensity the elder boys at Newmarket take pleasure in creating themselves diversion. Jack Clarke, who was about seventeen, was a very good natured, peaceable lad: but all the others in our stable were very assiduous in exciting the little ones to quarrel, and persuading him, who would have wished to remain at peace, to believe he must certainly be a coward. This stigma I was not willing to be loaded with: the consequence was, that battle after battle was fought, first between me and Jack, and then between me and Tom, for two of us were so named. Jack had been a shepherd boy, was older by some months than myself, preceded me as a jockey, was a most inveterate, obstinate, and unfair antagonist, for he would bite, kick, or do any thing to gain the victory, was quite as strong as myself, and excessively hardy. However, he entirely wanted method and presence of mind; and after three or four desperate contests, he was obliged fairly to own he was not my equal. Tom, who came into the service after me, was likewise older, larger-limbed, and had more strength; but my conquest of him was much more easy. He had bones, sinews, and thews, as Shakspeare says, but little heart; he was prevailed on to venture a second combat, but not a third. I had the good fortune also to face and outface those among Lord March's boys, who lived opposite to us, and with whom we had continual intercourse; so that, though I was but thirteen, I became the acknowledged hero among the boys of both stables, under fifteen years of age. Thus much for the footing on which I stood with my rivals within the first half-year after I came to live with John Watson. It must be remembered, that all the tricks of which Jack Clarke had warned me, had been tried upon me in vain. These things, together with my aptitude at play, soon placed me as the leading boy of the young fry.

'From nine o'clock in the morning till four, the whole time is at the boy's own disposal, except that of breakfasting and dining, which he is seldom apt to think ill employed. But in summer, spring, and autumn, the stables are again opened at four, and woe to him who is absent! I never was but once, when unfortunately Captain Vernon himself happened to arrive at Newmarket. I never saw John Watson so angry with me before or afterwards; though even then, after giving me four or five strokes across the shoulders with an ashen plant, he threw it away in disgust, and exclaimed, as he turned from me—"Damn the boy! On such a day!"

'The business to be done in the afternoon is but a repetition, with little or no variety, of that which I have described for the morning, except that they return to stables at seven, or rather earlier, again dress their horses, give them a first feed, go to supper themselves, give a second feed, prepare the horses' beds, pick and prepare the hay with which they sup, and by nine o'clock the stables are once more shut up, containing both horses and boys.

CHAPTER XIV

'The time I remained at Newmarket, was upwards of two years and a half; during which many things occurred worthy of remembrance; and though in their nature dissimilar, yet all tending to have that influence on character, by which, if my poor philosophy holds good, character is progressively formed. Instead of relating these different accidents as they occurred, I shall rather endeavour to collect them into classes, beginning with those that immediately belong to the business of a jockey.

'I have already remarked how necessary it is for the best horseman never to be off his guard. At the time the little accident I am going to relate happened, and which I could not but then consider as rather disgraceful, I was so persuaded of being always on the alert, and of my power of instantaneously recovering my seat, that I supposed what followed to be nearly an impossibility.—The horse that I then rode happened to be unwell; and did not take his morning and evening exercise with the others. I was therefore ordered to walk him out a couple of hours in the middle of the day, to canter him gently, give him a certain quantity of water, and canter and walk him home again. The horse was by no means apt to start or play tricks of an uncommon kind: he was besides unwell, and dull in spirits, and I was more than usually unsuspicious of accident. After a walk, and a very gentle gallop, I brought him to water. Our watering troughs stood by a pump under the Devil's Ditch, on the side next to Newmarket. Not foreseeing any possible danger, I held the reins quite slack, and did not sit upright in my seat, but rested on one thigh; when suddenly, without any warning, a grey rook, of the species common to that plain, ascended on the wing up the ditch within half a yard of the ground, and in a direction that would scarcely have missed the horse's head. At this sudden apparition, an arrow from a bow could hardly exceed the velocity with which he darted round to avoid his enemy; and the impulse was so unforeseen, and so irresistible, that I and my whole stock of self-confidence, and self-conceit, lay humbled in the dust. I was greatly afraid, lest my disgrace should be witnessed by any one, and particularly that the horse should make for home: however, his fright ceasing, and his health not disposing him to be wanton, he easily suffered himself to be caught, and mounted, and my honour received no stain.

'I felt this accident the more, because I was at this very time receiving new marks of confidence in my talents. A horse bred in Ireland had been brought into our train: John Watson did not think proper to let a boy of heavy weight back him, and among those of light weight, I was the only one in whom he durst confide. It was for this horse that I quitted the Dun horse, on whose back I had obtained such praise, and upon him the other boy of the name of Tom was mounted, but only for two or three mornings. Dun immediately discovered he was Tom's master, and would not keep up in the gallop, but would go what pace he pleased: if struck, he began to plunge, kick, and rear, threw his rider, and made all the boys laugh and hoot at him, and thoroughly exposed him to mortification.—I was frequently obliged to change my horse, but it was always for one more difficult to manage; and not only so, but I generally preserved an honour that had been early conferred on me, that of leading the gallop, let me ride what horse I would. At one of these changes I was transferred to the back of a little mare, which had long been ridden by Jack Clarke, who was wanted for a horse of more power, but of less spirit. On her too I led the gallop. She was not so much vicious as full of play. Whenever I pleased, when the gallop was begun, by a turn of the arm and a pretended flourish, I could make her start out of the line, clap her head between her legs, fling her hind heels in the air, and begin to cut capers. This excitement was generally sufficient for the whole string, who would start off one after another, each playing his gambols, and perhaps, one or two of them throwing their riders. Under such a temptation for triumph, I was perhaps as prudent as could be expected from a boy of my age; but when John Watson did not happen to be with us, I could not always resist the vanity of shewing that I was equal to the best of them, and quite before the majority. When John was absent, the bad riders would sometimes, before I began the gallop, very humbly intreat me not to play them any tricks; and when they did, I was good-natured enough to comply.

'In every stud of horses, there are frequent changes; and as their qualities are discovered, one horse is rejected, and a colt or perhaps a stranger bought and admitted. It happened on such an occasion, that a little horse was brought us from another stud, whence he had been rejected for being unmanageable. He had shewn himself restive, and besides the snaffle, was ridden in a check-rein. I was immediately placed on his back, and what seemed rather more extraordinary, ordered to lead the gallop, as usual. I do not know how it happened, but under me he shewed very little disposition to be refractory, and whenever the humour occurred, it was soon overcome: that he was however watchful for an opportunity to do mischief, the following incident will discover. Our time for hard exercise had begun perhaps a fortnight or three weeks. As that proceeds, the boys are less cautious, each having less suspicion of his horse. I was leading the gallop one morning, and had gone more than half the way towards the foot of Cambridge hill, when something induced me to call and speak to a boy behind me; for which purpose I rather unseated myself, and as I looked back, rested on my left thigh. The arch traitor no sooner felt the precarious seat I had taken, than he suddenly plunged from the path, had his head between his legs, his heels in the air, and exerting all his power of bodily contortion, flung me from the saddle with only one foot in the stirrup, and both my legs on the off side. I immediately heard the whole set of boys behind shouting triumphantly, "A calf, a calf!" a phrase of contempt for a boy that is thrown. Though the horse was then in the midst of his wild antics, and increasing his pace to full speed, as far as the tricks he was playing would permit, still finding I had a foot in the stirrup, I replied to their shouts by a whisper to myself, "It is no calf yet." The horse took the usual course, turned up Cambridge hill, and now rather increased his speed than his mischievous tricks.

This opportunity I took with that rashness of spirit which is peculiar to boys; and notwithstanding the prodigious speed and irregular motion of the horse, threw my left leg over the saddle. It was with the utmost difficulty I could preserve my balance, but I did: though by this effort I lost hold of the reins, both my feet were out of the stirrups, and the horse for a moment was entirely his own master. But my grand object was gained: I was once more firmly seated, the reins and the stirrups were recovered. In a twinkling, the horse, instead of being pulled up, was urged to his utmost speed, and when he came to the end of the gallop, he stopped of himself with a very good will, as he was heartily breathed. The short exclamations of the boys at having witnessed what they thought an impossibility, were the gratification I received, and the greatest, perhaps, that could be bestowed.

'I once saw an instance of what may be called the grandeur of alarm in a horse. In winter, during short exercise, I was returning one evening on the back of a hunter, that was put in training for the hunter's plate. There had been some little rain, and the channel always dry in summer, was then a small brook. As I must have rubbed his legs dry if wetted, I gave him the rein, and made him leap the brook, which he understood as a challenge for play, and beginning to gambol, after a few antics he reared very high, and plunging forward with great force, alighted with his fore-feet on the edge of a deep gravel-pit half filled with water, so near that a very few inches further he must have gone headlong down. His first astonishment and fear were so great, that he stood for some time breathless and motionless: then, gradually recollecting himself, his back became curved, his ears erect, his hind and fore leg in a position for sudden retreat; his nostrils from an inward snort burst into one loud expression of horror; and rearing on his hind legs, he turned short round, expressing all the terrors he had felt by the utmost violence of plunging, kicking, and other bodily exertions. I was not quite so much frightened as he had been, but I was heartily glad when he became quiet again, that the accident had been no worse. The only little misfortune I had was the loss of my cap, and being obliged to ride back some way in order to recover it.

'Among the disagreeable, and in some degree dangerous accidents that happened to me, was the following. We had an old grey blood gelding touched in his wind, called Puff, on which John Watson generally used to ride. He had some vicious tricks, and the thing that made him dangerous was, that, in the jockey's phrase, he had lost his mouth, that is, the bit could make no impression on him, and he could run away with the strongest rider: but the whim did not often take him. The watering troughs were filled once a day, and as they were about a mile and a half distant, each lad performed that duty in turns, being obliged to walk for that purpose to the Devil's Ditch and back. One day, when it was my turn, old Puff being in the stable, John Watson allowed me to shorten my task by a ride, of which I was very glad, and Puff was soon brought out. For the office of filling the troughs, it was necessary to take a pail, and accordingly I flung one with the rim over my right shoulder, and under my left arm, as was the way with us when we walked. I then mounted, but had not gone far, when I found Mr. Puff was determined on one of his frolics. He set off at a good round gallop. This I should not have regarded in the least, had it not been for the pail at my back. But he was a tall horse, the ruts before the race-course began were numerous, rough, and often narrow, and he amused himself with crossing them; so that the rim of the pail was very disagreeable, and now and then hurt my back severely. I foresaw, however, that my only remedy was to tire him out at his own diversion. As soon, therefore, as I had an opportunity, I turned him upon the turf, by which I avoided the worst jolts of the pail; and instead of struggling with him, I gave him head, hurried him forward as fast as he could go, passed along the side called the flat, turned in beside the Devil's Ditch, forbore to push him when we came to the watering troughs, but found the obstinate old devil was resolved not to stop. I then took him full gallop up Cambridge hill, and into Newmarket, supposing his own home would satisfy him. But no! away he went into the town, while some boys belonging to other stables exclaimed, "Here is old Puff running away with Watson's Tom." At a certain distance down the main street, was a street on the left, by which making a little circle, I might again bring his head homewards, and that road I prevailed on him to take; but as he was not easily guided, he thought proper to gallop on the causeway, till he came to a post which bent inwards towards the wall, so much that it was doubtful whether his body would pass. He stopped short at a single step, but luckily I had foreseen this, or I should certainly have been pitched over his neck, and probably my back would have been broken, had I not employed both hands with all my force to counteract the shock. Having measured the distance with his eye, he saw he could pass, which to me was a new danger: my legs would one or both of them have wanted room, but with the same juvenile activity, I raised them on the withers, and away again we went, mutually escaping unhurt. By this time, however, my gentleman was wearied; in two minutes we were at home, and there he thought proper once more to stop. The worst of it, however, was, that I had still to water my troughs. I shall conclude this chapter with a fact which may deserve the attention of the philosopher, as an instance of deep feeling, great sagacity, and almost unconquerable ambition among horses; and which goes nearly to prove, that they themselves understand why they contend with each other. I have mentioned a vicious horse, of the name of Forester, that would obey no boy but Tom Watson: he was about ten or eleven years old, and had been a horse of some repute, but unfortunately his feet foundered, for the cure of which he was suffered to remain a great part of his time at grass. However, when I had been about a year and a half at Newmarket, Captain Vernon thought proper to match him against Elephant, a horse belonging to Sir Jennison Shaftoe, whom by the bye I saw ride this famous match. Forester, therefore, had been taken up, and kept in training a sufficient time to qualify him to run this match; but it was evident that his legs and feet were far from being in that sound state which such an exertion required, so that we concluded he must be beaten, for the reputation of Elephant arose out of his power rather than his speed. Either I mistake, or the match was a four mile heat over the strait course; and the abilities of Forester were such, that he passed the flat, and ascended the hill as far as the distance post, nose to nose with Elephant; so that John Watson who rode him began to conceive hopes. Between this and the chair, Elephant, in consequence of hard whipping, got some little way before him, while Forester exerted every possible power to recover at least his lost equality; till finding all his efforts ineffectual, he made one sudden spring, and caught Elephant by the under-jaw, which he griped so violently as to hold him back; nor was it without the utmost difficulty that he could be forced to quit his hold. Poor Forester, he lost; but he lost most honourably! Every experienced groom, we were told, thought it a most extraordinary circumstance. John Watson declared he had never in his life been more surprised by the behaviour of a horse.

CHAPTER XV

'The feature in my character which was to distinguish it at a later period of life, namely, some few pretensions to literary acquirement, has appeared for a time to have lain dormant. After I left Berkshire, circumstances had been so little favourable to me, that, except the mighty volume of Sacred Writ (which I always continued more or less to peruse, wherever I found a Bible) and the two small remnants of romance I have mentioned, letters seemed to have lost sight of me, and I of letters. Books were not then, as they fortunately are now, great or small, on this subject or on that, to be found in almost every house: a book, except of prayers, or of daily religious use, was scarcely to be seen but among the opulent, or in the possession of the studious; and by the opulent they were often disregarded with a degree of neglect which would now be almost disgraceful. Yet in the course of six or seven years, it can hardly be imagined that not a single book fell in my way; or that if it did, I should not eagerly employ such opportunity as I had to know its contents. Even the walls of cottages and little alehouses would do something; for many of them had old English ballads, such as Death and the Lady, and Margaret's Ghost, with lamentable tragedies, or King Charles's golden rules, occasionally pasted on them. These were at that time the learning, and often, no doubt, the delight of the vulgar. However, I may venture to affirm, that during the period we have passed, I neither had in my possession, nor met with any book of any kind which I had leisure and permission to read through. During my residence at Newmarket, I was not quite so much in the desert, though, as far as my limits extended, I was little removed: a tolerable estimate of the boundary may be formed from the remaining chapters of this book.

'Whether I had or had not begun to scrawl and imitate writing, or whether I was able to convey written intelligence concerning myself to my father for some months after I left him, I cannot say, but we were very careful not to lose sight of each other; and following his affection, as well as his love of change, in about half a year he came to Newmarket himself, where he at first procured work of the most ordinary kind at his trade. There was one among his shop-mates whom I well remember, for he was struck with me and I with him: he not only made shoes, but was a cock-feeder of some estimation; and what was to me much more interesting, he had read so much as to have made himself acquainted with the most popular English authors of that day. He even lent me books to read: among which were Gulliver's Travels, and the Spectator, both of which could not but be to me of the highest importance. I remember after I had read them, he asked me to consider and tell him which I liked best: I immediately replied, "there was no need of consideration, I liked Gulliver's Travels ten times the best." "Aye," said he, "I would have laid my life on it, boys and young people always prefer the marvellous to the true." I acquiesced in his judgment, which, however, only proved that neither he nor I understood Gulliver, though it afforded me infinite delight. The behaviour of my father, who being at work, was present at this, and two or three other dialogues in which there was a kind of literary pretension, denoted the pride and exultation of his heart. He remarked, "that many such boys as Tom were not to be found! It was odd enough! He knew not where Tom had picked it up, he had never had a brain for such things; but God gave some gifts to some, and others to others, seeing He was very bountiful: but, if he guessed rightly, He had given Tom his share!" My father was not a little flattered to find that the cock-feeder was inclined to concur with him in opinion. I remember little else of my literary cock-feeder; yet the advantages I had gained from him in letting me know there were books like these, and introducing me, though but to a momentary view of Swift and Addison, were perhaps incalculable.

'That love of the marvellous which is natural to ill-informed man, is still more lively in childhood. I used to listen with the greatest pleasure to a tale of providential interference; my blood thrilled through my frame at a story of an angel alighting in a field, walking up to a worthy clergyman, telling him a secret known only to himself, and then persuading him to change his road, by which he avoided the murderers that were lying in wait for him. Yet I know not how it happened, but even at this time I refused to believe in witches; and when stories of hobgoblins, of houses that were haunted, or of nightly apparitions were repeated, I remained incredulous. I had either invented or heard some of the plain arguments which shewed the absurdity of such opinions. It will be seen in the following chapter, that my incredulity in this respect was of use to me, though I cannot account for the manner in which I came by it at so early an age.

'Books of piety, if the author were but inspired with zeal, fixed my attention whenever I met with them: "the Whole Duty of Man" was my favourite study, and still more Horneck's "Crucified Jesus." I had not yet arrived at Baxter's "Saint's Everlasting Rest," or "The Life of Francis Spira;" but John Bunyan I ranked among the most divine authors I had ever read. In fact I was truly well-intentioned, but my zeal was too ardent, and liable to become dangerous.

'One day as I happened to be passing the church, I heard voices singing, which exercise I admired; and having, as I thought, a tuneful voice, I was desirous of becoming acquainted with so pleasing an art. I approached the church door, found it open, and went in, when I found my ear charmed with some heavenly addition to the sweet melody of music; and on inquiry was told, they were singing in four parts. At the head of them was a Mr. Langham, who could sing in a feigned soprano's voice, and who was their instructor in music; for they were all acknowledged learners except himself, and each of them paid him five shillings a quarter for his trouble in teaching them. Having stood with delight to listen some time, a conversation at length began, I was invited to try my voice, and after a ready compliance, both my voice and ear were pronounced to be good. Thus encouraged, I ventured to ask if I might come among them; and was answered, yes; they should be very glad to have me, for they much wanted a treble voice, and all they required was that I should conform to the rules of the society. I inquired what those rules were, and was told, they each paid five shillings entrance, and five shillings a quarter to Mr. Langham, another five shillings for Arnold's Psalmody; and that they paid forfeits of pennies and twopences, if they were absent on certain days, at certain hours, or infringed other necessary bye-laws. An expense so great alarmed me: I would willingly have complied with their forfeits, because I depended on my own punctuality; but fifteen shillings was a vast sum, and I told them what it was that made me hesitate. As they were desirous to have me, they agreed that I should sing out of their books; and Langham, who had great good-nature, said, since I was but a boy, and my wages could not be great, he would give up the entrance money. It was therefore agreed, that with the payment of five shillings a quarter to Mr. Langham, I should be instructed by him in the art of psalmody.

'From the little I that day learned, and from another lesson or two, I obtained a tolerable conception of striking intervals upwards or downwards; such as the third, the fourth, and the remainder of the octave, the chief feature in which I soon understood, but of course I found most difficulty in the third, sixth, and seventh. Previously however to any great progress, I was obliged to purchase Arnold's Psalmody; and studious over this divine treasure, I passed many a forenoon extended in the hay-loft. My chief, and almost my only difficulty, lay in the impenetrable obscurity of such technical words as were not explained either by their own nature, or by the author in other language. I was illiterate, I knew the language of the vulgar well, but little more. Perhaps no words ever puzzled poor mortal more than I was puzzled by the words, *major* and *minor keys*. I think it a duty, which no one who writes an elementary book ought to neglect, to give a vocabulary of all the words which are not in common use, in the language in which he writes; and to explain them by the simplest terms in that language; or if that cannot be done, by a clear and easy paraphrase. The hours I spent by myself in mastering whatever belonged to notation, and in learning the intervals, occasioned my progress to be so very different from that of the others, that it excited the admiration of them all; and Mr. Langham, the great man whom I then looked up to, declared it was surprising. If any part was out, I heard it immediately, and often struck the note for them, getting the start of Mr. Langham. If he should happen to be absent, he said that I could set them all right; so that by this, and the clearness of my voice, I obtained the nickname of the sweet singer of Israel.

'My quickness at whatever related to reading became so far known, that a man about fifty, who had many years kept a school in Newmarket, made me the offer, if I would become his scholar, to teach me gratis. Thoroughly glad of the opportunity, I thanked him kindly, and instantly complied. The next morning I went to his school, where I saw a number of boys, to whom I was introduced by the master, as one whom they ought to respect. "I 'll set him a word of six syllables," said he, "and I 'll engage for him that he shall spell it instantly without the least mistake, or without ever perhaps having seen it before. Pray, my boy," said he, "how do you spell Mahershalalashbas?" The boys first stared at a word of so foreign a sound, and next at the immediate readiness with which I spelled it, though it would be difficult to find a word that could puzzle less: however, since they all wondered at me, it was very natural I should wonder at myself, and that I did most assuredly. The master shewed me the first seat as an honour to his school, where he assured me I might remain as long as he could teach me any thing, and he had by no means the character of ignorance. But, poor gentleman, he had another failing, which I could still less pardon; for every afternoon he was to be seen drunk in the streets, and that to such an offensive and shameful degree, that though I was very desirous to gain some little addition to my stock of knowledge, I felt myself so disgraced by my master, that I went but three times to his school.

'This plan, however, suggested another. By trade, Mr. Langham was a maker of leather breeches, which were worn through all Newmarket: but he had by some means acquired rather a greater love of knowledge, and more of it than at that period belonged to his station; for I believe he was only a journeyman. Hearing me bewail the opportunity I had lost, and especially that of acquiring the first rudiments of arithmetic, he joined in my regret, saying it was a pity he could not afford to teach me himself for nothing, and that I could not spare another five shillings a quarter out of my wages; otherwise he would have given me one lesson daily between stable-hours. To this proposal, after turning it in my mind, I however agreed. I continued with him three months, and in that time mastered rule after rule so well, as to understand Practice and the Rule of Three. Except what I have already related, these three months, as far as others were concerned, may be truly called my course of education. At the age of two and three and thirty, indeed, when I was endeavouring to acquire the French language, I paid a Monsieur Raymond twenty shillings for a few lessons, but the good he did me was so little that it was money thrown away. At Newmarket I was so intent on studying arithmetic, that for want of better apparatus, I have often got an old nail, and cast up sums on the paling of the stable-yard. The boys prophesied I should go mad; in which sagacious conjecture our old maid and housekeeper, for she was both, joined them.

CHAPTER XVI

'While my music and my arithmetic were thus in some sort confusing my brain, I became not only ashamed of, but alarmed at myself; for being occasionally sent on errands, I found my memory absent, and made several blunders, a thing to which I had been wholly unaccustomed. One day, when John Watson was at home, I was sent only for two things, and forgot one of them, at which I heard him exclaim, without any reproach,—"God bless me, what is come to the boy!" This startled me a little. As however I remember nothing more of the paroxysm, it could not have lasted very long.

'My father did not continue long at his trade, and was obliged to seek some other mode of subsistence. For some months during the middle part of the time that I remained as a stable-boy, he had the office at an inn of fetching and carrying the Royston mail; and being afterwards tired of this, he quitted Newmarket for London, leaving me once more with much good advice, and no small degree of regret. I loved my father, and knew his intentions were honest: but almost from infancy, I was aware they were not wise.

'I suppose that that property of the mind, which creates certain indistinct forms and imaginary lines in the clear and visible appearances of things, is common to every person of a lively and active fancy, for I have it still; and now that I am old, much more in sickness than in health. I recollect an instance of this, which occurred about the time I am speaking of. The cowardly boys made bargains with each other to go in pairs, when their business called them to different parts of the yard and out-houses after it was dark: I determined always to go by myself. One evening, intending to fetch some hay from a hay-loft, as I was mounting the ladder, an object presented itself, that instantly stopped me. It was a clear moon-light night, and I beheld the perfect face of a man extended on the hay. He must be a stranger, and might be a robber, or person of evil intentions. I had no idea of a ghost; and though alarmed, I reasoned on probabilities. The more I looked, the more thoroughly I was convinced I saw a real face. Still I continued to reason. I was half way up the ladder. If I returned, I must either fabricate a falsehood, or openly declare why, and this would have been cause of triumph to those whose actions betrayed their fears, and of the greater disgrace to me for having assumed a superiority. The man might be a beggar, who had only obtained entrance by some means, that he might rest comfortably: and even if his designs were wicked, they could not be against me, for I had little to lose: so that at last I determined to proceed. As I have said, the light of the moon was bright: it shone into the loft through the holes and crevices of a side hanging door; and I had mounted three steps higher, before the vision totally disappeared, and was replaced by the rude and unmeaning lines of reality. No man was there, consequently no man's face could be seen. This incident was a wholesome lesson: it taught me to think much on the facility with which the senses are deceived, and the folly with which they entertain fear.

'The boys, who had paired off as mutual protectors to each other, had left my name-sake Tom, being the odd one, without a mate, and as he was much more remarkable for his cowardice than his valour, the best expedient he could think of was to offer me a halfpenny a night if I would go with him in the dark to get his hay. I believe nothing could have made him stir from the fire-side on a winter night, but the fear of neglecting his stable duties, which fear to all of us had something in it that was almost sacred. We had at this time in the stables a very beautiful male tabby cat, as remarkable for his familiarity with the horses and boys, as for his fine colours, symmetry, and strength. He would go through the stable night by night, and place himself on the withers, first of this horse, then of the next, and there familiarly take his sleep, till he had made the whole round. The boys had taught him several tricks, which he very willingly repeated as often as they gave the signal, without taking offence at the rogueries they occasionally practised upon him; so that he was a general favourite with every one, from John Watson even to Old Betty. One evening as I was going with Tom to get his hay, and we approached the stable in which it happened then to be kept, Tom leading the road (for cowards are always desirous to convince themselves they are really valiant), a very sudden, vehement, and discordant noise was heard; to listen to which, Tom's valour was wholly unequal. Flying from the stable, he was at the back door of the house in a twinkling. I was paid for my courage: pride and curiosity concurred to make me show it, and I remained firm at my post. I stood still, while the noise at intervals was several times repeated. It was the beginning of winter, and at one end of the stable a certain quantity of autumn wheat was stowed. I recollected this circumstance, and after considering some time, at length the truth struck me, and I called, "Come along, Tom, it is the cat and the rats fighting, but they will leave off when they hear us come into the stable." We had neither candle nor lanthorn. It was a maxim with John Watson to trust no such things with boys, whose nightly duty it was to fetch trusses of straw and armfuls of hay; but I entered the stable, gave Tom his hay, loaded myself with my own, and confident in the valour of our favourite cat, said to him—"We shall find a rare number of dead rats to-morrow, Tom." I knew not the power of numbers, nor the imbecility of an individual so exposed. The next morning we found our hero lying dead in the stable, with only three dead rats beside him. What the number of the wounded was, must remain a secret to posterity: though of the value of this, and other secrets of the same kind, I have often entertained my doubts.

'John Watson remained a bachelor, and old Betty was the only female, at least that I can recollect, in the family: she was very ignorant, and very angry when boys durst contend with her age and experience, but we did not greatly respect her anger. She was so strenuous an advocate for goblins, apparitions, and especially witchcraft, that she did not in the least scruple to affirm things the most extravagant. One of her positions was, that unthinking old women with less courage and sagacity than herself, were taken by surprise, and made witches against their will. Imps of the devil came slily upon them, run up their clothes, caught some part of the breast in their mouths, and made teat for themselves. She provoked me very much, yet I could not help laughing; while she, to prove the truth of what she said, affirmed, she had seen them peeping out more than once; and that on a certain night, two of them made a desperate attempt on her, which she could no otherwise defeat, than by taking up first one, and then the other, with the tongs, and throwing them both into the red hot part of the kitchen fire.

'Stories like these are almost too ludicrous to be mentioned, but the one I am going to relate, was at that time to me as tragical as any thing that could happen to an individual.

'Jack Clarke, now about eighteen, was spending his evening before nine o'clock in his good-natured way among the boys of Lord March, who lived opposite. One of them, (I forget his name), took down a fowling-piece that was hanging over the kitchen chimney, and playing that trick which has been so repeatedly, and in my opinion so strangely played, said, "Now, Jack, I 'll shoot you." As he spoke, he pulled the trigger, and the distance between them being short, Clarke was shot on the left side of his face, the middle half of which immediately became as frightful a wound as perhaps was ever beheld. The lads of both stables were there instantly: the grooms came the moment they could be found, and the terror and distress of the scene were very great, for every body felt kindness for Jack Clarke. Tom Watson was dispatched on horseback to Cambridge in search of all the surgical and medical aid that could be obtained; and such was his speed, that the surgeon, the doctor, and himself, were back by midnight, and the medical men busy in probing, inquiring, and consulting, while poor Clarke lay groaning, extended on the bed of John Watson. The left cheek-bone, eye, and other parts, were shattered past hope: the case was thought precarious, there was a bare possibility that the patient, miserable as he was, and shocking to look at, might survive. When the physician and surgeon had done all that they could by dressing and giving orders, John Watson took them under his care for the night. Whether he found beds and entertainment for them at an inn, or at the house of a friend, I know not; but as I saw him no more, I suppose he remained with them to keep them company, for such scenes do not immediately dispose the mind to sleep. Among ourselves at home, however, a very serious question arose, no less than that of, who should sit up and watch with him all night? His sufferings were so incessant, his groans so terrifying, and the wounds (by which the inside of the head was made visible) had been so bloody, raw, and torn, being at the same time most frightfully spread all round with gun-powder, and black and red spots, that every person present frankly owned they durst not stay alone all night with him in the same chamber. When it was proposed to old Betty, she was in an agony. All the older boys expressed the terror it would give them:—some sleep must be had, and it being winter, the stables were to open before four. What, therefore, could be done? I own I was almost like the rest, but I most truly pitied poor Jack Clarke. I had always felt a kindness for him, and to see him forsaken at so distressing a moment, left by himself in such a wretched state, no one able to foresee what he might want, overcame me, and I said, "Well, since nobody else will, I must!" Besides, by an action so bold, performed by a boy at my age, I gained an undeniable superiority, of which any one of the elder boys would have been proud.—The medical men remained at Newmarket, or went and came as their business required, while Jack Clarke continued under their hands. I was truly anxious for his cure, though from what I had seen on the first night, and from my ignorance in surgery, I had supposed such a thing impossible. I was therefore surprised that he should seem at first to linger on, that afterwards the wounds should fill up, and assume a less frightful appearance, and that at length a perfect cure should be effected. It was certainly thought to do great honour to Cambridge. The left eye was lost, the appearance of the bones was disfigured, and the deep stain of the gun-powder remained. But before I came away appearances varied, the marks of the gun-powder became less; and when I left Newmarket, Jack Clarke had been long restored to the stables, where he continued to live, apparently in good health.

CHAPTER XVII

'During these events and accidents, the trifling studies I might be said to have, were, as far as I had the means, pursued. That is, whenever I could procure a book, I did not fail to read it; I took pains to repeat, that I might well understand my rules in arithmetic; and as for music, Arnold was studied with increasing ardour. But the instructions of Arnold were only vocal: nay, they had a stricter limitation, they were confined to psalmody. Had I possessed any instrument, had I begun to practise, and had the means of obtaining a livelihood suggested themselves in this way, music would, most probably, have been my profession.

'Moral remarks do not escape the notice of boys whose minds are active, nor the moral consequences of things, so much perhaps as is supposed. They now and then discover how much they are themselves affected by them; and therefore are not only led to re-consider their own, but begin to ruminate on some of the practices of mankind. For myself, I looked up with delight to angelic purity, and with awful reverence to the sublime attributes of the Godhead. The first I considered as scarcely beyond the attainment of man; the second I considered it as the grand reward of saints and angels to be allowed to comprehend. Towards the future attainment of any such angelic perfection, I could not discover the least tendency in the manners of Newmarket, or the practices of the people around me. When left to themselves, petty vulgar vices, such as their means could afford, were common among them: and at the grand periodical meetings of the place, I heard of nothing but cards, dice, cock-fighting, and gambling to an enormous amount.

'One anecdote which John Watson, who was no babbler, told his brother Tom, and which Tom was eager enough to repeat, struck me for its singularity and grandeur; as it appeared to me, who then knew nothing of vast money speculations, and who know but little at present. In addition to matches, plates, and other modes of adventure, that of a sweepstakes had come into vogue: and the opportunity it gave to deep calculators to secure themselves from loss by *hedging* their bets, greatly multiplied the bettors, and gave uncommon animation to the sweepstakes mode. In one of these, Captain Vernon had entered a colt or filly; and as the prize to be obtained was great, the whole stable was on the alert. It was prophesied that the race would be a severe one; for, though the horses had none of them run before, they were all of the highest breed; that is, their sires and dams were in the first lists of fame. As was foreseen, the contest was indeed a severe one; for it could not be decided,—it was a dead heat: but our colt was by no means among the first. Yet so adroit was Captain Vernon in hedging his bets, that if one of the two colts that made it a dead heat had beaten, our master would, on that occasion, have won ten thousand pounds: as it was, he lost nothing, nor would in any case have lost any thing. In the language of the turf, he stood ten thousand pounds to nothing.

'A fact, so extraordinary to ignorance, and so splendid to poverty, could not pass through a mind like mine without making a strong impression, which the tales told by the boys of the sudden rise of gamblers, their reverses, desperate fortunes, empty pockets at night, and hats full of guineas in the morning, only tended to increase. With my companions I repeated, *Never venture, never win:* and in this state of puerile avarice, I made bets to the amount of more than half my year's wages, the very next day on the race ground, all to be decided within the week. Concerning the event, however, when it was too late, my mind began to misgive me. By each match, on which I had a venture, my fears were increased; for I generally found myself on the wrong side. My crowns and half-crowns were dwindling away; yet in the midst of my despair, I looked with some degree of surprise at myself, and said, "How can these boys with whom I betted, who are so very ignorant, and over whom, even on the turf or in the stable, I feel my own superiority, have so much more cunning in laying bets than I have?"

'Like many of the tragical farces of life, this hastily formed scheme of mine was without a basis, formed on confused suppositions, and ending in total disappointment; for at the end of the week, the loss I had sustained was somewhat either over or under a guinea and a half. To me, who never before had ventured to bet sixpence, who now well-remembered that all the good books I had read, held gambling in abhorrence; and who recollected, with unspeakable anguish, that the sin and folly must be told to my father; that, face to face, I must avow what I had done (for how else could I account for the expenditure of money, for which I could find no equivalent?) to me, I say, these were excruciating thoughts, as will be proved by the desperate remedy I attempted. Well was it for me that the races were over, or my little purse would have been wholly emptied. As it was not therefore possible for me to recover my loss in this way, I began to consider whether there was no other, and despair at length suggested another; a wild one, it is true, but no one could deny its possibility. The race week was just over; thousands of pounds had been betted; guineas and purses had passed in multitudes, from hand to hand, and pocket to pocket, over a vast area, extending from the chair to the Devil's Ditch, and spreading to I know not what width: might not some stray guinea, nay, perhaps some weighty purse, be now lying there for the first fortunate comer? Or rather, was it not a thing exceedingly likely? I could not suppose the seeds of this golden fruit to be sown exceeding thick, or that it would not require a long search: but I must not spare my labour: such good luck might befal me, and so eager was my mind to rid itself of its present anguish, that I was willing to believe I should be successful.

'The next morning the horses were no sooner dressed and fed, and the stables cleaned, than I hurried to execute my design. I began it by a most careful examination of the betting chair, round which I slowly walked a number of times, and finding nothing below, mounted, examined its crevices, and after often attempting to go, and as often lingering by some faint endeavour to renew hope, could not quit it at last, but with painful reluctance. Where should I seek next? The whole heath was before me; but which was the lucky spot? Groups of horsemen had assembled here and there: but to find each individual place? Oh that I had marks by which to discover!—Thus with my eyes fixed on the ground, wandering eagerly in every direction, I slowly paced the ground, wholly intent on the perplexing thoughts and fruitless pursuits, till increasing disappointment, and inquiry into the time of day, sent me back. This experiment of money-finding on Newmarket heath, might be thought sufficient, but, no! I had an hour in the evening: it was a fine moonlight night, and dejected as I was, I resolved again to try, and forth I went, but it was indeed on the forlorn hope. The incident however forcibly paints the nature of my feelings. I could not endure to confess to my father both my guilt, and evident inferiority in cunning to other boys; and to fabricate a lie, was perhaps equally painful.

All that remained was to put off the evil day, and come to my account as late as might be. What I mean will be better understood, when it is known I had determined to leave Newmarket, and return to my father, not however without having first consulted him, and gained his approbation. My mind having its own somewhat peculiar bias, circumstances had rather occurred to disgust me, than to invite my stay. I despised my companions for the grossness of their ideas, and the total absence of every pursuit, in which the mind appeared to have any share. It was even with sneers of contempt that they saw me intent on acquiring some small portion of knowledge: so that I was far from having any prompter, either as a friend or a rival. As far as I was concerned with horses, I was pleased; but I saw scarcely a biped, John Watson excepted, in whom I could find any thing to admire.

'Having taken my resolution, I had to summon up my courage to give John Watson warning; not that I in the least suspected he would say any thing more than, very well: but he had been a kind master, had relieved me in the day of my distress, had never imputed faults to me, of which I was not guilty, had fairly waited to give my faculties time to shew themselves, and had rewarded them with no common degree of praise when accident brought them to light. It was therefore painful to leave such a master. With my cap off, and unusual awkwardness in my manner, I went up to him, and he perceiving I was embarrassed, yet had something to say, began thus. "Well, Tom, what is the matter now?"—"Oh, Sir, nothing much is the matter: only I had just a word to say."—"Well, well, don't stand about it; let me hear."—"Nay, Sir, it is a trifle; I only came to tell you, I think of going to London."—"To London?"—"Yes, Sir, if you please."—"When do you mean to go to London?"—"When my year is up, Sir."—"To London! What the plague has put that whim into your head?"—"I believe you know my father is in London."—"Well, what of that?"—"We have written together, so it is resolved on."—"Have you got a place?"—"I don't want one, Sir, I could not have a better than I have."—"And what are you to do?"—"I can't tell that yet, but I think of being a shoemaker."—"Pshaw, you are a blockhead, and your father is a foolish man."—"He loves me very dearly, Sir; and I love and honour him."—"Yes, yes, I believe you are a good boy, but I tell you, you are both doing a very foolish thing. Stay at Newmarket, and I will be bound for it, you will make your fortune."—"I would rather go back to my father, Sir, if you please."—"Nay, then, pray take your own way."—So saying, he turned from me with very visible chagrin, at which I felt some surprise; for I did not imagine it would give him the least concern, should any one lad in the stables quit his service.

'Spring and summer kept passing away: Arnold continued to afford me difficulties which I continued to overcome: my good-tempered, pleasant friend, (for so he was) the breeches-maker, and I, used often to consult together; and his surprise that I should so soon have gone beyond him with respect to the theory of music, not a little flattered me. The honest psalm-singers were told I was about to leave them, and owned they were sorry to hear it, I gave them so much assistance. In short, such friends as a poor boy of fifteen, wholly unrelated in the town could have, all expressed a degree of regret at parting: my stable-companions were the only persons who expressed no emotion one way or the other. I must here, however, except poor Jack Clarke, who, as he was the first that introduced me to Newmarket, so he was the last, of whom I took leave.'

END OF MR. HOLCROFT'S NARRATIVE

THE LIFE OF THOMAS HOLCROFT

BOOK II

CHAPTER I

At the expiration of his year, Mr. Holcroft left John Watson and his associates at Newmarket; and returned, as he had intended, to his father, who then kept a cobler's stall in South-Audley Street. He was at this time near sixteen. He continued to work in the stall with his father, till the latter could afford to pay a journey-man shoe-maker, to instruct him in the business of making shoes, which in time he learned so well, as to obtain the best wages.

From his early childhood, however, he had eagerly read whatever books came in his way, and this habit did not now leave him: so that, though an exceedingly quick workman, it was rarely that he had a shilling to spare, except for absolute necessaries; and when he had, it was spent at an old book-stall, and *his time was again idled away in reading*.—Such was the complaint continually made against him. At nineteen, he travelled to Liverpool with his father, who seems still to have retained his love of wandering, and who was most probably determined in this excursion by a desire to revisit his native country. This happened in the year 1764: and in the year following, Mr. Holcroft married. While he continued at Liverpool, he procured the humble office of teaching children to read, at a small school in the town. But in less than a year, he left the country, and came to London. Here he continued to work at his trade as a shoe-maker, yet gleaning knowledge with all the industry in his power. He had advanced as far as fractions in Arithmetic, knew something of geometry, could write a legible hand, and had made himself a complete master of vocal music. But the stooping position required in making shoes brought on a return of his old disorder, the asthma; and as he hated the trade, he made every effort to find out some other employment.

Mr. Holcroft had, through life, except during the time he was at Newmarket, felt the effects of poverty very severely: but they now preyed more upon his mind than his body. He continually ruminated on the advantages that would have resulted from a good education; and the consciousness that he had neither received one, nor could now pay for instruction, gave him the utmost uneasiness. He was not aware that the desultory materials which he had been at so much pains to collect, would at last form themselves into a consistent mass.

It seems however, that at this period he could not resist the inclination he occasionally felt to commit his thoughts to paper: he even found an editor of a newspaper (the Whitehall Evening Post,) who so far approved of his essays, as to pay him five shillings a column for them. One of them was transcribed into the Annual Register: but, according to his own account, it was much too jejune a performance to deserve any such honour. About this time, Mr. Holcroft attempted to set up a day-school somewhere in the country, where for three months he lived upon potatoes and buttermilk, and had but one scholar. At the expiration of the first quarter, he gave up his school, and returned to London. After this, he obtained admission into the family of Mr. Granville Sharpe, with whom he went to reside, partly in the character of a servant, and partly I believe as a secretary. It is not certain, whether he was introduced to the notice of this amiable but eccentric man, by his literary efforts, or by accident. Both before and after he went to live with Mr. S. he had been accustomed to attend a reading-room, or spouting-club, the members of which in turn rehearsed scenes and passages out of plays. His master did not think this the best mode of spending his time, and made some attempts to cure him of what he considered as an idle habit. These, however, proved ineffectual, and he was at length dismissed from the house of his patron.

He now found himself once more in the streets of London, without money, without a friend, that shame or pride would suffer him to disclose his wants to, or a habitation of any kind to hide his head in. At last, as he was wandering along wherever his feet led him, his eye accidentally glanced on a printed paper pasted against the wall. This was an invitation to all those spirited young fellows, who chose to make their fortunes as common soldiers in the service of the East India Company. He read it with the greatest satisfaction, and was posting away with all haste to enrol his name in that honourable corps, when he was met by one of the persons, whom he had known at the spouting-club. His companion, seeing his bundle and rueful face, asked him where he was going; to which Holcroft replied, that, had he inquired five minutes sooner, he could not have told him; but that, at present, he was for the wars. At this his spouting friend appeared greatly surprised, and told him he thought he could put him upon a better scheme. He said, one Macklin, a famous London actor, was going over to play in Dublin; that he had been inquiring of him for a young fellow, who had a turn for the stage; and that, if Holcroft pleased, he would introduce him; observing that it would be time enough to carry the knapsack, if the sock did not succeed. This proposal was too agreeable to our adventurer to be heard with inattention. Accordingly, having thanked his acquaintance, and accepted his offer, the next day was fixed upon for his introduction to Macklin. The friend, on whom Holcroft had thus unexpectedly lighted was, in fact, a kind of scout, employed by Macklin, to pick up young adventurers of promising talents: it being one of this actor's passions to make actors of others; though he was in some respects the worst qualified for the office of any man in the world.

The next morning they proceeded to the place of appointment, when they found the great man seated on his couch, which stood by the fire; and on which, whenever he felt himself tired or drowsy, he went to rest, both day and night; so that he sometimes was not in bed for a fortnight together. As they went in, they were followed by his wife, who brought him a bason of tea and some toast, with each of which he found fifty faults in the rudest manner. He afterwards called to her several times, upon the most frivolous occasions, when she was dignified with the style and title of Bess. His countenance, as it appeared to Mr. Holcroft at this interview, was the most forbidding he had ever beheld; and age, which had deprived him of his teeth, had not added to its softness. After desiring the young candidate to sit down, he eyed him very narrowly for some time, and then asked him, *What had put it into his head to turn actor?* The abruptness of the question disconcerted him; and it was some time before he could answer, in rather a confused manner, that he had *taken it into his head* to suppose it was genius, but that it was very possible he might be mistaken. 'Yes,' said he, 'that's possible enough; and by G—d, Sir, you are not the first that I have known so mistaken.' Holcroft smiled at his satire, and the other grinned ghastly with his leathern lips, for our tyro had not added to the beauty of his visage by repeating his words. While Macklin was drinking his tea, they talked on indifferent subjects; and as Holcroft did not happen to differ with him, but on the contrary had opportunities of saying several things which confirmed his opinions, he was pleased to allow that he had the appearance of an ingenious young man. When his beverage was finished, he desired him to speak a speech out of some play, which being done, he remarked that he had never in his life heard a young spouter speak naturally, and therefore he was not surprised that Holcroft did not: but, as he seemed tractable, and willing to learn, if he would call again on the morrow, he would hear and answer him further.

When they had descended into the street, Holcroft's companion assured him *it would do*, for that he had met with a very favourable reception; which was indeed the case, considering the character of the person to whom their visit had been paid.

According to the account Mr. Holcroft has left of this extraordinary man, the author of the comedy of the Man of the World, he was born in the century before the last, yet at the time of Mr. Holcroft's application to him (which was in the year 1770) his faculties did not seem in the least impaired. He was said to have been bred in the interior parts of Ireland, and in such utter ignorance, as not to be able to read at the age of forty. The progress, therefore, which he made afterwards, was an astonishing proof of his genius and industry. His body, like his mind, was cast in a mould as rough as it was durable. His aspect and address confounded his inferiors; and the delight he took in making others fear and admire him gave him an aversion to the society of those whose knowledge exceeded his own; nor was he ever heard to acknowledge superiority in any man. He had no respect for the modesty of youth or sex, but would say the most discouraging, as well as grossest things; and felt pleasure in proportion to the pain he gave. It was common with him to ask his pupils, why they did not rather think of becoming bricklayers than players. He was impatient of contradiction to an extreme; and when he found fault, if the person attempted to answer, he stopped him without hearing, by saying, 'Ha, you have always a reason for being in the wrong!' This impatience carried him still farther; it often rendered him exceedingly abusive. He could pronounce the words *scoundrel*, *fool*, *blockhead*, familiarly, without the least annoyance to his nervous system. He indeed pretended to the strictest impartiality, and while his passions were unconcerned, often preserved it: but these were so extremely irritable, that the least opposition was construed into an unpardonable insult; and the want of immediate apprehension in his pupils subjected them to the most galling contempt, which excited despair instead of emulation. His authority was too severe a climate for the tender plant of genius ever to thrive in. His judgment was, however, in general sound, and his instructions those of a master. 'In short,' says Mr. H., 'if I may estimate the sensations of others by my own, those despots, who, as we are told, shoot their attendants for their diversion, are not regarded with more awe than Macklin was by his pupils and domestics.' Such is the conclusion of his severe, but apparently faithful portrait of this singular character; and it will be seen in the sequel, that he had sufficient opportunity for rendering it accurate.

Having finished their visit, Holcroft and his friend adjourned to the Black Lion, in Russell Street, which was at that time a place of resort for theatrical people. He here learnt that Mr. Foote was going to take a company to Edinburgh, after the close of the summer season. Being now anxious to secure himself an engagement, and the manner of Macklin having neither prejudiced him much in his favour, nor given him any certain hopes of success, he resolved to apply to Mr. Foote. Accordingly, making some slight excuse to his companion, he hastened into Suffolk Street.

He had the good fortune to find the manager at breakfast with a young man, whom he employed partly on the stage, and partly as an amanuensis. 'Well,' said he, 'young gentleman, I guess your business by the sheepishness of your manner; you have got the theatrical cacoethes, you have rubbed your shoulder against the scene: hey, is it not so?' Holcroft answered that it was. 'Well, and what great hero should you wish to personate? Hamlet, or Richard, or Othello, or who?' Holcroft replied, that he distrusted his capacity for performing any that he had mentioned. 'Indeed,' said he, 'that's a wonderful sign of grace. I have been teazed for these many years by all the spouters in London, of which honourable fraternity I dare say you are a member; for I can perceive no stage varnish, none of your true strolling brass lacker on your face.'—'No indeed, Sir.'—'I thought so. Well, Sir, I never saw a spouter before, that did not want to surprise the town in Pierre, or Lothario, or some character that demands all the address, and every requisite of a master in the art. But, come, give us a touch of your quality; a speech: here's a youngster,' pointing to his secretary, 'will roar Jaffier against Pierre, let the loudest take both.' Accordingly, he held the book, and at it they fell: the scene they chose, was that of the before-mentioned characters in Venice Preserved. For a little while after they began, it seems that Holcroft took the hint Foote had thrown out, and restrained his wrath: but this appeared so insipid, and the ideas of rant and excellence were so strongly connected in his mind, that when Jaffier began to exalt his voice, he could no longer contain himself; but, as Nic. Bottom says, they both roared so, that it would have done your heart good to hear them. Foote smiled, and after enduring this vigorous attack upon his organs of hearing as long as he was able, interrupted them.

Far from discouraging our new beginner, he told him, that with respect to giving the meaning of the words, he spoke much more correctly than he had expected. 'But,' said he, 'like other novices, you seem to imagine that all excellence lies in the lungs: whereas such violent exertions should be used but very sparingly, and upon extraordinary occasions; for (besides that these two gentlemen, instead of straining their throats, are supposed to be in common conversation) if an actor make no reserve of his powers, how is he to rise according to the tone of the passion?' He then read the scene they had rehearsed, and with so much propriety and ease, as well as force, that Holcroft was surprised, having hitherto supposed the risible faculties to be the only ones over which he had any great power.

Mr. Holcroft afterwards displayed his musical talents, which also met with the approbation of Foote; who, however, told him, that as he was entirely inexperienced with respect to the stage, if he engaged him, his salary at first would be very low. He said, it was impossible to judge with certainty of stage requisites, till they had been proved; and that if, upon consideration, he thought it expedient to accept of one pound per week, he might come to him again a day or two before the theatre in the Haymarket shut up; but that if he could meet with a more flattering offer in the mean time, he begged he might be no obstacle.

Mr. Holcroft came away from this celebrated wit, delighted with the ease and frankness of his behaviour, and elated with his prospect of success. But as he had promised Macklin to call again, he did not think it right to fail in his engagement. Accordingly, on his second visit, he gave him a part to read in a piece of which he himself was the author, and which had met with great success. Having finished this task apparently to the satisfaction of the author, the latter paid his visitor so high a compliment, as to read to him some scenes of a comedy, which he was then writing. They were characteristic and satirical, and met with Holcroft's sincere and hearty approbation, which, it may be supposed, did not a little contribute to prejudice Macklin in his favour. He, however, thought himself bound not to act with duplicity; and he therefore told Macklin of the offer he had had from Foote, excusing this second application from the necessity he was under of getting immediate employment. Macklin allowed the force of his excuse, but thought he might do better in Ireland. He inquired if Holcroft had any objection to become a prompter, adding that the office was profitable, and one, for which, from the good hand he wrote, and other circumstances, he might easily qualify himself. Holcroft answered that Macklin was the best judge of his fitness for the office, and that he had no objection to the situation, except that it would be more agreeable to his inclination to become an actor. This inclination the other said might be indulged at the same time, which would render him so much the more useful. Little parts would frequently be wanting; the going on for these would accustom him to face the audience, and tread the stage, which would be an advantage. Holcroft then demanded what salary would be annexed to this office; and received for answer, that, as there was a good deal of trouble in it, he could not have less than thirty shillings a week, especially if he undertook to perform small parts occasionally. Macklin also informed him, that he was not manager himself, he only went as a performer: but that Mr. ——, one of the managers, was in town, to whom he would speak, and in two or three days return him a positive answer. In the interim he desired his *protegé* to call in the morning, and he would give him instructions in the part he had read to him, for he had some thoughts of letting him play it. After making proper acknowledgments for these favours, our young adventurer took his leave, much better pleased than at his first visit.

CHAPTER II

It was not long before everything was settled in the manner proposed by Macklin, and Mr. Holcroft was informed, that it was necessary for him to set off for Dublin, it being the intention of the proprietors to open the theatre about the beginning of October. In consequence of the desire he had expressed to appear in some character, Macklin had promised not only to procure him such an opportunity, but likewise to instruct and become his patron: and on Holcroft's representing to him his want of cash for the journey, he lent him six guineas on the part of the managers, and gave him a letter to Mr. ——, who would, he said, provide him with a lodging, and do him other trifling services, which would be agreeable to a person in his situation.

Holcroft now rewarded his spouting friend with a guinea, redeemed his clothes, which he had been forced to pawn, and left London, elated with the most flattering hopes.—He arrived in Dublin about the latter end of September, 1770. The novelty of the scene, and the vast difference in the economy and manners of the people, made a strong impression on his imagination. The bar at the mouth of the Liffy renders the entrance up that river passable only to ships of small burthen, and to them only when the tide serves. It was low water when the packet arrived at the mouth of the river, and a boat came alongside of the vessel, into which most of the passengers went, rather than wait another tide, and our adventurer among the rest. The river divides the city, and the other passengers were set on shore on the quay; but Holcroft, as directed by his letter, inquired for Capel-Street, which was on the opposite side. Thither, accordingly, he was carried; and his trunk and himself landed in a beer-house. He was rather astonished, when the waterman demanded five and five-pence, together with a quart of three-penny, for his conveyance from the packet: and the more so, as he had seen the other passengers give but a shilling each, and one or two of the meaner among them only sixpence. He remonstrated against the imposition, and quoted the precedent of the shilling; but in vain.

The disorder of their looks, the smoothness of their tongues, and the possession they had taken of his trunk, on which one of them seated himself, while the other argued the case, induced our novice to comply with their demands: but what gave him the greatest astonishment was, that the landlord of the beer-house, who had sworn stoutly to their honesty, while he was paying them, no sooner saw their backs turned, than, according to his own phraseology, 'he pitched them to the *divel*, for a couple of cut-throat, *chating* rascals, that *desarved* hanging worse than a murderer.'

The reflections to which this and similar scenes gave rise in Mr. Holcroft's mind, though trite, are not the less worthy of attention. He says, 'During my short stay in Ireland, I had but too many occasions to observe a shocking depravity of manners, which I attribute either to the laws, or the want of a due enforcement of them. The Irish are habitually, not naturally, licentious. They have all that warmth and generosity which are the characteristics of the best dispositions; and when properly educated, are an honour to mankind. Ireland has produced many first-rate geniuses; and in my opinion, nothing but the foregoing circumstance has prevented her from producing many more. It is the legislature which forms the manners of a nation.'

When our traveller set out from London, he was assured that the house would open in the beginning of October, but it was November before the season commenced; so that his finances were once more exhausted, and he was obliged to apply to the friend to whom Macklin had recommended him, for a farther supply. The acting manager was one D——, a busy, bustling fellow, void of all civility, who pretended to carry the world before him.

Mr. Holcroft soon discovered that there was an insurmountable antipathy between this man's disposition and his own. But the means of his subsistence were at stake; he endeavoured, therefore, to accommodate himself to the other's temper as much as possible, and waited for the arrival of Macklin with the utmost impatience. He understood that his engagement had been permanently fixed at thirty shillings a week; but, when he went to the treasury, he found it reduced to a guinea; and whenever he pleaded his engagement, received the most mortifying and insulting answers. He discovered the entire improbability of his becoming a favourite. None were such but those who could administer the grossest flattery, and who industriously listened to whatever was said in the theatre concerning this petty despot and his management, in order to repeat it in the ear of their employer.

Holcroft had vainly imagined that the presence of Macklin would put an end to all his grievances: he looked up to him as his patron, as one who had been the occasion of his leaving England, who had pledged himself to be his friend, and was bound to protect him. Whether D—— had prejudiced him against Holcroft, or whether Macklin himself was aware of his deficiency in the honeyed arts of adulation, he could not determine; but he found him very cold in his interest, and far more disposed to browbeat than countenance him. He had, as we have seen, promised to teach him a part, and bring him out in it; but when he ventured to remind him of it, he received only sarcastic remarks on his incapacity. Holcroft, however, persisted in asserting the positiveness of his agreement with respect to his salary, concerning which Macklin had the meanness to equivocate; but he succeeded in obtaining an addition of four shillings a week.

Unable to extricate himself, he endured the insults of malice and ignorance for five months, till the money which he had borrowed had been deducted from his stipend, and then D—— immediately discharged him. It would be no easy task to describe what he must have felt at this moment: he was not possessed of five shillings in the world, was in a strange country, and had no means, now that he was shut out from the theatre, of obtaining a livelihood. He saw nothing but misery and famine before him, and he uttered the bitterest exclamations against Macklin for the perfidiousness of his conduct. This he felt so strongly, that though Macklin by the severity of his manner had gained an almost entire ascendancy over him, he went to his house, and with the utmost firmness, after observing that he would rather starve than incur any further obligations to him, displayed the impropriety and injustice of his conduct in such animated terms, that all his wonted sternness fled, and the cynic stood abashed before the boy.

There was another theatre open in Smock-Alley, under the direction of Mossop: but he was insolvent, and none of his people were paid. Here, however, as a last resource, Holcroft applied, and was engaged at the same nominal salary that he had in Capel-Street.

It soon appeared that there was no probability of his being paid for his performance at Mossop's theatre: he was therefore forced to quit Dublin, and went on board the Packet for Parkgate, in March, 1771.

The wind was fair till they had lost sight of the hill of Hoath; but soon after sun-set, a hurricane came on, which in this narrow and rocky sea, put their lives in imminent danger. Of this, however, from the violent effects of the sea-sickness, Holcroft was insensible. They were driven during the storm, considerably to the north; and such was the ignorance of the master and his two or three superannuated mariners, that he still continued sailing to the northward, having no knowledge of navigation, but what he had gained by coasting between the two kingdoms. He was therefore on the present occasion quite at a loss; so that in all probability they might have made a voyage to Greenland, had not an intelligent Scotchman among the passengers known some of the headlands in his own country. The master would have contested the point, but that the passengers perceived his want of skill, and joined the North-Briton, who with a degree of warmth expressive of his attachment to his bleak hills, exclaimed, 'What the de'el, mon, d' ye think I dinna ken the craig of Ailsa?'

They were eight days without putting into any port, except sending the boat on shore on the evening of the seventh at the Isle of Man, to procure some provisions for the passengers, who were almost starving, having consumed the stock, which is usually provided for voyages of this kind, in a day or two after the storm had abated. The reason of their being kept so long from port was the dead calm which had succeeded; and which the mariners, who are the most superstitious of all beings, attributed to there being some Jonas on board. This opinion they inculcated among the poor Irish who had paid half a crown for their passage in the hold; who were as ignorant as themselves, and much more mischievous. Unluckily, Holcroft was the person on whom their suspicions lighted. They had discovered him to be a player, a profession, which was at one time regarded by the universal consent of mankind as altogether *profane*. The common Irish in the hold were chiefly catholics, and the sixth day from their departure happened to be Easter-Sunday. Holcroft had sauntered off the quarter-deck, with a volume of Hudibras in his hand, and had walked to the other end of the vessel, when he found himself encircled by two or three fellows with most ferocious countenances, who were gazing earnestly at him, with looks expressive of loathing and revenge. Most of the passengers were at breakfast, and there was no one on deck but these men, and a couple of the sailors, who joined them. The peculiarity of their manner excited his notice, and one of them asked him, his lips quivering with rage, 'If he had not better be getting a prayer-book, than be reading plays upon that blessed day?' Holcroft now perceived that the fellows were inebriated, and very imprudently, instead of soothing them, asked them if they imagined there was as much harm in reading a play as in getting drunk on that day, and so early in the morning. 'By the holy father,' replied the spokesman, 'I know you. You are the Jonas, and by Jasus the ship will never see land till you are tossed over-board, you and your plays along with you: and sure it will be a great deal better that such a wicked wretch as you should go to the bottom, than that all the poor innocent souls in the ship should be lost.' This speech entirely disconcerted him. The fellow's resolute tone, and the approbation which his companions discovered, were alarming. He, however, preserved presence of mind enough to assure them, it was not a play-book that he was reading, and opened it to convince them, while he slunk away to the quarter-deck, which he gained not without the greatest difficulty. Mr. Holcroft arrived at Chester without any farther accident.

CHAPTER III

Mr. Holcroft had now the world once more before him; and he resolved to write to such travelling companies as he could obtain any intelligence of. His knowledge of music, his talents as a singer, and his recent arrival from the Dublin theatre, were recommendations which procured him the offer of several engagements. He closed with one, in a company that was then at Leeds in Yorkshire. In this his evil fortune was again predominant. He found the affairs of the company in a state of the greatest disorder: the players were despised in the town, and quarrelling with one another and the manager. Here, however, he discovered how necessary practice is to the profession of a player; and perceived that, though some of his new associates could scarcely read, they could all, from the mere force of habit, speak better on the stage than he could.

In a few weeks, in consequence of continual bickerings and jealousies, most of the players deserted the manager; and no others coming to supply their places, the company dissolved of itself. A letter had followed our luckless hero from Chester, inviting him to join another set of actors, then at Hereford: but this had been written nearly a month; it was a hundred and sixty miles across the country, and he did not know, if he set out, whether he should find them there; or if he did, whether they might now stand in need of his assistance. But his money was by this time reduced so low, that it was necessary to come to an immediate determination. With a heavy heart, then, and a light purse, did he begin another journey: and on the fifth day, entered an inn by the road-side, which was eight-and-twenty miles from Hereford, with the sum of nine-pence in his pocket; and in the morning made his exit pennyless. The fatigue he had already undergone, and the scanty fare he had allowed himself, had so reduced his spirits, that he found considerable difficulty in performing this last day's journey on an empty stomach: but there was no remedy. About four o'clock he ascended the hill that looks down upon that ancient city, at the sight of which a thousand anxieties took possession of his bosom. He inquired of the first person he met, with an emotion not easily to be expressed, if the comedians had left Hereford; and to his great joy, was answered that they had not. Faint, weary, and ready to drop with hunger, he traversed the town to inquire for the manager: but it was one of the nights on which they did not perform, and the manager was not to be found. He was then directed to his brother, who was a barber in the place; and upon the family's observing his weakness, and desiring to know if he was not well, he collected courage enough to tell them that he was greatly fatigued, having come a long journey, and for the last day not having broken his fast, except at the brook. Notwithstanding this confession, in making which he had evidently done great violence to his feelings, they heard it without offering him the least refreshment, or so much as testifying either surprise or pity; and he left the house with tears in his eyes. When the players understood that a fresh member was come to join them, they, from sympathy, very soon discovered his situation; and were not a little incensed at the story of the barber.

The company into which Mr. Holcroft was now introduced was that of the Kembles: the father of Mrs. Siddons was the manager. Mr. H. continued with this company some time; and in the course of their peregrinations he visited Ludlow, Worcester, Leominster, Bewdly, Bromsgrove, and Droitwich; in all which places he acted inferior parts. One of the actors in this company, of the name of Downing or Dunning, seems to have made a pretty strong impression on Mr. H.'s fancy, for he has left a very particular description of him. This stage-hero had a large, red, bottle-nose, with little intellect; but he was tall, looked passably when made up for the stage, and had a tolerable voice, though monotonous. To hide the redness of his nose, it was his custom to powder it: but unluckily he drank brandy; the humour that flowed to his nose, made it irritable, and in the course of a scene the powder was usually rubbed off. His wife stood behind the scenes with the powder-puff ready, and exclaimed when he came off—'Lord! Curse it, George! how you rub your poor nose! Come here, and let me powder it. Do you think Alexander the Great had such a nose? I am sure Juliet would never have married Romeo with such a bottle-nose. Upon my word, if your nose had been so red, and large, when you ran away with me from the boarding-school, I should never have stepped into the same chaise with you and your journeyman captain, I assure you.' George seldom made any reply to these harangues, except 'Pshaw, woman,' or by beginning to repeat his part.

In the year 1798, when Mr. Holcroft spent an evening with old Mrs. Kemble, and talked over past times with her, she gave a whimsical picture of this wife of Downing. Mrs. D. was addicted to drinking, exceedingly nervous, and snuffled when she spoke. She used to tell her own story as follows: 'He calls himself Downing, Ma'am, but his name is Dunning. I was a quaker, Ma'am, when he first knew me, and put to a boarding-school. He and one Chalmers (I suppose you have heard of that Chalmers, he gave himself the title of Captain)—Well, Ma'am, while I was at the boarding-school, they came a courting to me. Dunning, my husband, that you see there, was a tall, handsome fellow enough; he had not such a bottle-nose then, Ma'am, nor such spindle legs; so he put on a coat edged with gold lace, I don't know where he got it, and gave himself the airs of a gentleman. He thought I was a great fortune; but, God help me, I had not a shilling; and I believed him to be what he pretended, when all the while he was no better than a barber; and this Captain Chalmers was his journeyman. So they persuaded me, innocent fool, to run away with them, thinking they had got a prize, and I thought the same; so the biter on both sides was bit. So that is the history, Ma'am, of me and Mr. Dunning.'

This maudlin lady was often employed to receive the money at the play-house door, and was suspected of petty embezzlements to supply herself with liquor. Mr. Holcroft used sometimes to rally her a little unmercifully on her love of the bottle, and the adventure of the Captain. The dialogue is somewhat coarse, but it may serve as a sample of the tone of conversation which prevailed in provincial companies at that time. 'It is very cold to night, Mrs. Downing.'—'Yes, sir.'—'I hope you take care to keep yourself warm.'—'What do you mean, sir?'—'Flannel and a little comfort.' 'What comfort, sir!'—'You know what I mean.'—'I know nothing about you, sir!'—'A drop of cordial; lamb's wool is a good lining.'—'Gods curse your linings, sir; I know nothing about linings.'—

'Nay, don't be angry; I have not said you are tipsy.' 'Gods curse your sayings, sir, I don't care for your sayings. Mr. Downing shall never set foot, after this night, on the same boards with such an impertinent puppy.'—'Nay, my dear Mrs. Downing.'—'Yes, sir, you are no better; and if George Downing was a man, he would soon teach you good manners.'—'He is well qualified, my dear Mrs. D., for he practised upon many a *block-head* before he came to mine.'—'And what of that, sir. I understand you; but a barber is as good as a cobbler at any time.'

Now it must be allowed, that though there is not much wit or humour in all this, it is very easy and free spoken. Mr. Holcroft was young at the time, and probably ready enough to give into any joke, which he found the common practice of the place.—It may be remarked by the way, that there is a peculiar tone of banter and irony, bordering on ribaldry, which seems almost inseparable from the profession of strolling players. For this many reasons might be given: 1. The contempt (often most undeserved, no doubt) in which they are held by the world, and which they naturally reflect back on one another; for they must soon learn to despise a profession which they see despised by every one else, at least with that single exception which self-love contrives to reserve for us all. 2. The circumstance that they live by repeating the wit of others, and that they must naturally ape what they live by. In nine instances out of ten, however, this habitual temptation must produce impertinence instead of wit. 3. The custom of repeating things without meaning or consequence *on* the stage, must lead to the same freedom of speech when they are *off*. It is only acting a part. 4. They have not much else to do, and they assume a certain levity of manner as a resource against *ennui*, as well as to hide a sense of the mortifications and hardships they so often meet with. Lastly, their mode of life, which is always in companies, and in situations where they have an opportunity of becoming acquainted every moment with one another's weak sides, gives rise to a propensity to *quizzing*, as it does in all other open societies; such as of boys at school, of collegians, among lawyers, etc.—But to return to our narrative.

The company of which old Mr. Kemble was the manager, was more respectable than many other companies of strolling players; but it was not in so flourishing a condition as to place the manager beyond the reach of the immediate smiles or frowns of fortune. Of this the following anecdote may be cited as an instance. A benefit had been fixed for some of the family, in which Miss Kemble, then a little girl, was to come forward in some part, as a juvenile prodigy. The taste of the audience was not, it seems, so accommodating as in the present day, and the extreme youth of the performer disposed the gallery to noise and uproar instead of admiration. Their turbulent dissatisfaction quite disconcerted the child, and she was retiring bashfully from the stage, when her mother, who was a woman of a high spirit, and alarmed for the success of her little actress, came forward, and leading the child to the front of the house, made her repeat the fable of the Boys and the Frogs, which entirely turned the tide of popular opinion in her favour. What must the feelings of the same mother have been, when this child (afterwards Mrs. Siddons), became the admiration of the whole kingdom, the first seeing of whom was an event in every person's life never to be forgotten!

It may not be improper to remark in this place, that Mrs. Siddons first appeared in London about the year 1778, without exciting any great notice or expectation. She had acquired her fame in the country, before she was received in 1783 with such unbounded applause on the London theatres. There is a playful and lively letter from Mr. Holcroft to Miss Kemble (most probably Mrs. Siddons), dated, 12th Feb., 1779, returning her thanks for the favour of her late visit to him while in town, and desiring his remembrances to theatrical friends in the country, and among others, his *Baises Mains* to a Mr. Davis.

A difference with the manager (old Mr. Kemble), occasioned Mr. Holcroft to leave this company; from which he went to that of Stanton, which performed at Birmingham and in the neighbourhood, and sometimes made excursions to the north of England. A memorandum of Mr. Holcroft, dated 1799, gives some account of himself, and of one of his fellow-actors while in this company. 'A person called on me of the name of F——, who began by asking if I knew him. I answered no. He replied that it was likely enough, but that we had been acquainted when I was an actor in Walsal, where he played the second fiddle, and doubted not but I should remember that we had often played at billiards together. I answered that I recollected nothing of his person, though I played at billiards with several people, and probably with him. I then asked, which was the best player of the two? He replied that, because he squinted, people thought he could not play; but that, to the best of his recollection, he had won six or seven pounds of me, which greatly distressed me. Yes, said I, the loss of such a sum at that time (in 1773), would have so distressed me, that though I do forget multitudes of things and persons, I think I should not have forgotten such an incident. I was therefore persuaded he was much mistaken in the sum. In answer to this, he said, he had remarked to me at the time we were both upon the same *lay*; and finding I took offence at the expression, he had softened it by saying, we neither of us *wished to lose our money*. He therefore proposed that I should pay him by going halves with him, when he played and betted again. What degree of truth there was in all this, I cannot now exactly tell, only I know that I had a high spirit, and a detestation of all gambling conspiracies, though at that time I played for money and wished to win. I was poor, neither did I then conceive it to be wrong. The man said, he should not have taken the liberty to come to a gentleman *so high in the world* (at this I could not but smile,) as I now was, had not Mr. Clementi told him I was without pride, and entirely free of access. He is a stout man, nearly six feet high, and lives at Birmingham, where he teaches the violin, has daughters, whom he has taught to fiddle, play the harpsichord, etc., and sells music among his scholars. His business in London, he tells me, is to bring up his wife and daughters, and leave them here, the latter for instruction; and that one great motive for visiting me was, to hear Fanny (Miss Holcroft) play. In addition to ungain size, awkwardness, and squinting, he has a clownish gesticulation, and makes such strange contortions of face, as, were it not to avoid giving offence, would excite continual laughter. In talking of billiards, he spoke of a gentleman at Walsal, with whom he used to play, who came with his pockets full of guineas, and that the chinking of these excited in him the most extraordinary desire to win. Here he got up, and gave a picture by gesticulating, squinting, and drawing his muscles awry, of the agitation he used to be in when going to strike the balls. Nothing could exceed the effect of his *naïveté*. The conclusion of his history of Walsal was, that playing at billiards with Stanton, the manager, the latter complained of the largeness of the pockets; to which F—— replied, yes, they were very large, large indeed, as unconscionably large as his four dead shares, added to the five shares he received for the acting of his wife and children; which so affronted Stanton, that he discharged him the next week. He said he left Walsal with thirty pounds in his pocket, which he had won at billiards, promising his wife never to play more, and that he had kept his word. As he appeared to have been the industrious father of a family, I invited him to bring his daughters, and hear Fanny, who did not then happen to be at home; but his left-handed country breeding, or some other motive, made him decline fixing any time.'[1]

To enable the reader to understand the satirical allusion to the manager's shares, which cost poor F—— his situation as second fiddler in the company, it may be necessary to give a short account of the economy of a provincial theatre. This I cannot do better than by citing Mr. Holcroft's own words. 'A company of travelling comedians then is a small kingdom, of which the manager is the monarch. Their code of laws seems to have existed with few material variations since the days of Shakespeare, who is, with great reason, the god of their idolatry.—The person who is rich enough to furnish a wardrobe and scenes, commences manager, and has his privileges accordingly: if there are twenty persons in the company, for instance, the manager included, the receipts of the house, after all incidental expenses are deducted, are divided into four and twenty shares, four of which are called *dead* shares, and taken by the manager as payment for the use of his dresses and scenes; to these is added the share to which he is entitled as a performer. Our manager (Stanton), has five sons and daughters all ranked as performers; so that he sweeps eleven shares, that is, near half the profits of the theatre, into his pocket every night. This is a continual subject of discontent to the rest of the actors, who are all, to a man, disaffected to the higher powers. They are, however, most of them in debt to the manager, and of course chained to his galley; a circumstance which he does not fail to remind them of, whenever they are refractory.

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[1] One Keys, who was also a contemporary of Mr. H. in Stanton's company, and has since been a dancing-master, was the father of Mrs. Mills, who played the Spoiled Child, Sophia, in The Road to Ruin, etc.

'They appear to be a set of merry, thoughtless beings, who laugh in the midst of poverty, and who never want a quotation or a story to recruit their spirits. When they get any money, they seem in haste to spend it, lest some tyrant, in the shape of a dun, should snatch it from them. They have a circuit or set of towns, to which they resort when the time comes round; so that there are but three or four in our company who are not well known in *****. I observe that the town's-people are continually railing at them: yet are exceedingly unhappy, if they fail to return at the appointed time. It is a saying among us, that a player's six-pence does not go as far as a town's-man's groat; therefore, though the latter are continually abusing them for running in debt, they take good care to indemnify themselves, and are no great losers, if they get ten shillings in the pound.'

This patriarchal manager, with his wife, sons, and daughters, seems to have been not only an object of envy, but from his blunders and stupidity, the butt of the whole company. Among other instances, which are related of his talent for absurdity, he wished to have Shylock in the Merchant of Venice played in the dialect of Duke's Place, and was positive Shakespeare intended it so. He once told the duke in Othello, a messenger was arrived from the *gallows*, instead of the *galleys*; and in playing the part of Bardolph, where that worthy person, descanting on the fieriness of his nose, says, 'Behold these meteors, these exhalations,' he used to lift his hands to heaven with a solemn flourish, as if he had really seen 'the heavens on fire.'

CHAPTER IV

While Mr. Holcroft was in this company, or a short time before he entered it, he married again. His second wife was the sister of a Mr. Tipler, of Nottingham: by her he had two children, William, born in 1773, and Sophy, born at Cockermouth, in 1775. Her mother either died in child-bed of her, or shortly after. This marriage would have been a very happy one, had it not been embittered by scenes of continual distress and disappointment, which Mrs. H. bore with a resignation and sweetness of temper, which could not but endear her to a husband of Mr. Holcroft's character. There is a sort of Shandean manuscript of his, written at this time, and in which he gives an account of his own situation, crosses, poverty, etc. In this there are several passages expressive of the tenderest attachment to his wife; and which, from the amiable character he has drawn of her, she seems to have deserved. One of these will, I think, strongly paint the amiableness of his own heart. After describing a series of misfortunes, he breaks out into the following beautiful address to his wife.

'Oh Matilda! shall I ever forget thy tenderness and resignation? Or when in the bitterness of despair, beholding thee pregnant, wan with watching thy sick infant, and sitting assiduously at thy needle to earn a morsel of bread,—when thou hast beheld the salt rheum of biting anguish scald my agonizing cheek, with what tender love, what mild, what sweet persuasive patience, thou hast comforted my soul, and made even misery smile in hope, and fond forgetfulness! Richer than all the monarchs of the east, Matilda, has thy kindness made me: the world affords not thy equal!'

Mr. Holcroft afterwards removed with his wife into Booth's company. She had a good figure, and her husband had taught her to sing, and instructed her sufficiently in the business of the stage to render her serviceable to the theatre. When at Cockermouth in 1775, Mr. Holcroft addressed a letter and a poem to David Garrick, which I shall here insert; both as they are curious in themselves, and are characteristic of the state of his feelings at the time. For the romantic extravagance of his appeal to Garrick's generosity, no other apology seems necessary, than the old adage, that drowning men catch at straws.

'*To David Garrick, Esq.*

'Sir, I know of no excuse that I can make for the impertinence of this address, but my feelings. They press hard upon me, they are not to be withstood. They have told me your sympathetic heart sighs for the distressed, and weeps with the child of sorrow. I believe they told me truth.

'I am a strolling comedian, have a wife and family, for whom I would fain provide, but have sometimes, notwithstanding the strictest economy, found the task a very difficult one. I am now near three hundred miles from London, in a company that must, in all human probability, soon be dispersed; my wife lying-in at an inn, and in circumstances that I cannot describe. I do not wish to eat the bread of idleness; I neither know, nor wish to know any thing of luxury; and a trifling salary would make me affluent. I have played in the country with applause, and my friends, I am afraid, have flattered me: some of them have ranked me among the sons of genius, and I have, at times, been silly enough to believe them. I have succeeded best in low comedy and old men. I understand music very well, something of French and fencing, and have a very quick memory, as I can repeat any part under four lengths at six hours' notice. I have studied character, situation, dress, deliberation, enunciation, but above all, the eye and the manner; and have so far succeeded, as to be entirely at the head of my profession here in all those characters which nature has any way qualified me for. I am afraid, Sir, you think by this time that I have undertaken to write my own panegyric. That, however, is far from my intention; neither do I wish for employment in any but a very subordinate situation. My wife is a good figure, but her timidity would always place her behind a Queen at your theatre. If you were to find me capable of any thing better than an attendant, to your judgment would I cheerfully accede. If you do not chuse to employ my wife, but would only engage me, I think we should *both* remember it with that enthusiasm of gratitude, with which good minds are oppressed when they receive favours which they have no possible means of returning.

'I am, Sir,
'Your very humble Servant, etc.

'*Cockermouth, in Cumberland,*
June 1st, 1775, at the house
of George Bowes, hatter.

'P.S. With respect to the trifling Poem inclosed, I meant only to ease my own heart by it: should it reach yours, it will be more than I can expect.'

HOPE;

OR,

THE DELUSION.

'ADVANCE, soft soother of the mind,
Oh ! hither bend, a welcome guest:
Sweet Hope! stray hither, here thou 'lt find
Those sanguine thoughts, that please thee best.

Fair Fancy bring, thy darling child,
Deck'd in loose robes of Alpine white:
With thee, her happy Parent, wild
She wings her bold, romantic flight.

Blest pair ! I 'll sing, inspir'd by you,
Of wealth bestow'd to noble ends,
Of sweet enchanting scenes in view,
Of future times and faithful friends.

Tho' my sweet William, prattling youth,
For bread oft begs in accents meek ;
Matilda, fairest flower of truth,
Droops on my breast her dew-dipt cheek.

Tho' the big tears run down my face
To see her aspect wan and mild,
And hear her lov'd affection trace
My care-mark'd features in our child.

Tho' fortune lowly bows my neck,
And cares not for the wretch's groan,—
Yet smile but Hope, or Fancy beck,
And I 'll ascend her star-built throne.

Now, now I mount ! Behold me rise !
Hope lends me strength, and Fancy wings,
Oh ! listen to the magic lies,
Which fleeting, faithless Fancy sings !

With Independence truly blest,
Of some neat cot she styles me lord,
Where Age and Labour love to rest,
Where healthy viands press the board.

Now lay me down, kind nymph, at ease
 Beneath yon verdant mountain's brow,
Where wanton zephyrs fan the trees,
 Where violets spring, and waters flow.

What joys—delusive charmer, hold !
 Despair has seiz'd my thick'ning blood :
Her lips how pale ! Her cheek how cold !
 Matilda faints for want of food !'

The foregoing stanzas have been given less for the poetry than the history they contain. The distress which they paint did not, it seems, reach Garrick's heart : at least Mr. Holcroft left Cockermouth some time after without having received an answer to his letter. Whether his wife died before or after he left Cockermouth, I do not know ; but there is an epitaph on Mrs. Holcroft, written about this period, in which he feelingly laments her loss.

Beauty, Love, and Truth lie here :
 Passenger, a moment stay !
Breathe a sigh, and drop a tear,
 O'er her much-lamented clay.

Death ! thy dart is harmless now,
 Widow'd griefs thy stroke defy :
Weak the terrors of thy brow
 To the wretch who longs to die.

At the time that Mr. Holcroft was at Cockermouth, he was in Booth's company, which he had joined at Carlisle in the autumn of 1774. He had just then left Stanton's company, who were performing at Kendal. He was recommended to Booth by a friend of the name of Hatton, who was an excellent comedian, and the hero of the company. He had spoken in high terms of Holcroft's talents, who himself sent off a letter as his *avant-courier*, in which he undertook to do a great deal for very little. He engaged to perform all the old men, and principal low-comedy characters ; he was to be the *music*, that is, literally the sole accompaniment to all songs, etc., on his fiddle in the orchestra ; he undertook to instruct the younger performers in singing and music, and to write out the different casts or parts in every new comedy ; and, lastly, he was to furnish the theatre with several new pieces, never published, but which he brought with him in manuscript, among the rest Dr. Last in his Chariot, which character he himself performed. Here was certainly enough for one man to do ; and for all these services, various and important as they were, he stipulated that he should be entitled to a share and a half of the profits of the theatre, which generally amounted to between four and five pounds a night whenever it opened, that is, three times a week. This proposed salary could not, therefore, amount to more than seventeen or eighteen shillings weekly.

In the above list of employments, which Mr. Holcroft undertook to fulfil, the capital attraction, and that which he believed no country manager could resist, was the character of Dr. Last, which he did in imitation of the London performers. The scene in which he produced the most effect was that of the doctor's examination. This, as I have heard it described, was a very laughable, if not a very pleasing performance. Mr. Holcroft was naturally rather long-backed; and in order to give a ridiculous appearance to the doctor, he used to lean forwards, with his chin raised as high as possible into the air, and his body projecting proportionably behind; and in this frog-like attitude, with his eyes staring wide open, and his teeth chattering, he answered the questions that were put to him, in a harsh, tremulous voice, sometimes growling, and sometimes squeaking, and with such odd starts and twitches of countenance, that the effect produced upon the generality of spectators was altogether convulsive. The person who gave me this description said he thought the part a good deal overdone, but that it was a very entertaining caricature. Mr. Holcroft himself went through this part to gratify a friend, a very short time before his death. He said, it always produced a very great effect, whenever he acted it; but that the chief, or only merit it had, was that of being a close imitation of Weston's manner of doing it.[1]

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[1] Weston is celebrated for his unrivalled power of face, for looking the fool more naturally than any one else. Mr. Holcroft speaks of him in the following manner in the Theatrical Recorder.—'As an actor, I remember him well: to think of a few unrivalled performers, and to forget Weston, is impossible. The range of characters that he personated was confined. The parts in which he excited such uncommon emotion, were those of low humour. He was the most irresistible in those of perfect simplicity: his peculiar talent was the pure personification of nature. I do not think it possible for an actor to be less conscious than Weston appeared to be, that he was acting. While the audience was convulsed with laughter, he was perfectly unmoved: no look, no motion of the body, ever gave the least intimation that he knew himself to be Thomas Weston. Never for a moment was Thomas Weston present: it was always either Jerry Sneak, Doctor Last, Abel Drugger, Scrub, Sharp, or the very character, whatever it was, he stood there to perform; and it was performed with such a consistent and peculiar humour, it was so entirely distinct from any thing we call acting, and so perfect a resemblance of the person whom the pencil of the poet had depicted, that not only was the laughter excessive, nay sometimes almost painful, but the most critical mind was entirely satisfied. I doubt if Garrick, or any other actor, had so complete a power of disguising himself, and of assuming a character with

The history of the company in which Mr. Holcroft was now engaged, deserves notice from its singularity. The name of the original founder of the company was Mills, a Scotchman. He and his family had formerly travelled the country, playing nothing but Allan Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd. This they continued to do for several years without either scenery or music. As the younger branches of the family grew up, one of them became a scene-painter,

so little deviation from the conception he had previously formed. It was not only a perfect whole, but it was also unique.

'He first appeared in tragedy, which he always considered as his forte, though he was utterly unqualified for it. It was much against his will that he was accidentally forced to play Scrub in the Beaux' Stratagem, when he threw every one into raptures, except himself. Even the very boys followed him in the streets, exclaiming, "There—that's he that played Scrub!" His first appearance in London was at a booth in Bartholomew Fair. He was afterwards engaged by Foote, who was the first person who introduced him to public notice, and who wrote the part of Jerry Sneak expressly for him. Several stories are told of the readiness of his wit, and presence of mind.

'Shuter had long been the favourite of the galleries; and Weston, before he was well known, appeared as a substitute for Shuter, in the part of Sharp. Shuter's name was in the play-bills; and when Weston appeared, the galleries vociferated, "Shuter, Shuter!" Mrs. Clive played the part of Kitty Pry, and was no less a favourite than the other. The uproar continued, and nothing could be heard but "Shuter, Shuter!" As soon as it was possible to be heard, Weston, in his own inimitable and humourous manner, asked aloud, in a seriously stupid amazement, and pointing to Mrs. Clive,—"Shoot her! Shoot her! Why should I shoot her? I am sure she plays her part very well!" The apparent earnestness and simplicity with which he asked this question, were so inimitable, and it so truly applied to the excellent acting of Mrs. Clive, that the burst of laughter was universal, and the applause which Weston deserved, attended him through the part.

'Weston was no less remarkable for his dissipation and poverty, than for his comic excellence. It happened on a day that his name was in the play-bills, that he was arrested for a small sum, which he applied to the managers to discharge, which request they refused. Being known to the bailiff, Weston prevailed on him and his follower to go with him to the play, where he placed himself and them in the front of the two-shilling gallery.—Before the curtain drew up, an apology was made, that Mr. Weston, being ill, could not possibly attend; and it was therefore hoped, another performer might supply his place. Weston rose, as he intended, and declared aloud, the apology was entirely false; he was there, well, and ready to do his part, but that he was in custody for a small debt, for which, though entreated, the managers had refused to give security. Weston had well foreseen the consequences: the managers were obliged to set him free. Another actor would have immediately been expelled the theatre; but for Weston no substitute could be found.'—Vol. ii. p. 112.

The reason has often been asked, why actors are imprudent and extravagant. An answer may be found in the very nature of their profession. They live in a world of fancy, of artificial life and gaiety, and necessarily become careless of the real consequences of their actions. They make realities of imaginary things, and very naturally turn realities into a jest. Besides, all persons are so, who have no settled prospects in life before them.

and some of the others learned to fiddle. They now, therefore, added scenes and music to the representation of their favourite pastoral. They afterwards enlarged their circuit, and made excursions into the North of England: and though the loves of Patie and Peggy were a never-failing source of delight on the other side of the Tweed, their English auditors grew tired of this constant sameness. They therefore, after the performance of the *Gentle Shepherd*, which was still the business of the evening, introduced a farce occasionally, as a great treat to the audience. Mills's daughters married players. This brought an accession of strength into the family, so that they were now able to act regular plays; and by degrees, Allan Ramsay, with his shepherds and shepherdesses, and flocks of bleating sheep, was entirely discarded. Still, however, during the life-time of Mills, the whole business of the theatre, even to the shifting of the scenes, or making up of the dresses, was carried on in the circle of his own family. At his death, the property of the theatre was purchased by a Mr. Buck (formerly of Covent Garden theatre), who kept an inn at Penrith, and it was by him let out to Booth.

Mrs. Sparks, of Drury Lane Theatre, was an actress in this company, at the time Mr. Holcroft belonged to it, and the youngest daughter of Mills, the late manager. Mrs. Inchbald was playing in the same company, at Inverness, in Scotland, in 1773, or the winter of 1774. The company afterwards went to Glasgow, where not being permitted to play, they were all in the utmost distress. The whole stock was detained for rent and board, etc., at an inn. From this awkward situation they were liberated by a young Scotchman, who had just joined the company in a-kind of frolic, and who paid their score, and set them off to Kilmarnock, and from thence to Ayr, where they had a very brilliant run of good fortune.

Booth, the manager, was the same person who has since been well known as the inventor of the polygraphic art, and of the art of making cloth without spinning or weaving. He appears to have been always a man of much versatility of enterprise; and at this time added to his employments of manager and actor, the profession of a portrait-painter. The first thing he did when he came to any town, was to wait on the magistrate, to ask leave for his company to play; or if this was refused, that he might have the honour of painting his picture. If his scenes and dresses were lying idle, he was the more busy with his pencil: and that tempting bait hung out at the shop-windows, *Likenesses taken in this manner for half-a-guinea*, seldom failed to fill his pockets, while his company were starving.

CHAPTER V

Mr. Holcroft continued in Booth's company about a year and a half. He next joined Bates's company, which made the circuit of the principal towns on the east side of the north of England, including Durham, Sunderland, Darlington, Scarborough, Stockton-upon-Tees, etc.

It was sometime in the year 1777, that Mr. Holcroft walked with Mr. Shield (the celebrated composer, who was then one of the band in the same company) from Durham to Stockton-upon-Tees. Mr. Holcroft employed himself on the road in studying Lowth's Grammar, and reading Pope's *Homer*.—The writers that we read in our youth are those, for whom we generally retain the greatest fondness. Pope always continued a favorite with Mr. Holcroft, and held the highest place in his esteem after Milton, Shakspeare, and Dryden. He used often, in particular, to repeat the character of Atticus, which he considered as the finest piece of satire in the language. Moral description, good sense, keen observation, and strong passion, are the qualities which he seems chiefly to have sought in poetry. He had therefore little relish even for the best of our descriptive poets, and often spoke with indifference, approaching to contempt, of Thomson, Akenside, and others. He was, however, at this time, exceedingly eager to make himself acquainted with all our English poets of any note; and he was seldom without a volume of poetry in his pocket.

At the time that Bates's company were at Scarborough, Fisher, the late celebrated Oboe player, gave concerts there, which were led by Dance, and in which a Miss Harrop, (afterwards Mrs. Bates) was the principal vocal performer. Holcroft used to sing in the choruses.—He at this time practised a good deal on the fiddle, which he continued ever after to do occasionally; but he never became a good performer. It was Bates, who conducted the commemoration of Handel at Westminster Abbey.

Among the parts which Mr. Holcroft played most frequently, were—Polonius, which he did respectably; Scrub, in the Beaux' Stratagem; Bundle, in the Waterman; and Abel Drugger. He acted this last character after he came to London, one night when Garrick happened to be present.

At Stockton-upon-Tees, Mr. Holcroft first became acquainted with Ritson, the antiquarian, and author of the Treatise on animal food, who was afterwards one of his most intimate friends. He was at that time articled to an attorney in the town; but was, like most other young men of taste or talents, fonder of poetry than the law. The poet Cunningham was an actor in the same company. He was the intimate friend of Shield. He was, it seems, a man of a delicate constitution, of retired habits, and extreme sensibility, but an amiable and worthy man. The parts in which he acted with most success were mincing fops and pert coxcombs,—characters the most opposite to his own. He played Garrick's character of Fribble, in Miss in her Teens. He also excelled in Comus. He was often subject to fits of absence ; as a proof of which, he once forgot that he had played the Duke of Albany in King Lear, and had returned to the door of the theatre for the second time, before he recollected himself.—Besides his descriptive poems, he wrote several prologues ; and an opera called "The Lass with Speech," which was offered to the theatres, but never acted, and from which the Lying Valet was taken. He dedicated his poems to Garrick, who sent him two guineas on the occasion, which he returned, begging that they might be added to the theatrical fund. It seems he either did not want pecuniary remuneration for the compliment he had paid to Garrick, or he thought this a very inadequate one. When he was writing anything, his room was strewed with little scraps of paper, on which he wrote down any thought as it occurred ; and afterwards he had some difficulty in connecting these scattered, half-forgotten fragments together, before he could make out a fair copy.

At the time that Mr. Shield was most with him, he had been long in ill health, apparently in a decline ; and this had given a deeper tinge of melancholy to the natural thoughtfulness of his disposition. A little before his death, he wrote the following lines, which seem to convey a presentiment of his fate.

'Sweet object of the zephyr's kiss,
Come rose, come, courted by the hours,
Queen of the banks, the garden's bliss,
Come, and abash yon tawdry flow'rs.
"Why call us to revokeless doom,"
With grief the op'ning buds reply,
"Scarce suffer'd to expand our bloom,
Scarce born, alas ! before we die."

'Man, having pass'd appointed years,
(Years are but days) the scene must close :
And when Fate's messenger appears,
What is he but a withering rose ?'

These lines can hardly fail of being acceptable to the reader, when he is told, they were the last ever written by a man, to whom we are indebted for some of the most pleasing and elegant pastoral descriptions in the language.—It must abate something of the contempt with which we are too apt to mention the name of a strolling player, when we recollect that Cunningham was one.

Mr. Holcroft had never been satisfied with his employment as a strolling actor in the country. He sighed for the literary advantages, and literary intercourse which London afforded. He was indeed the whole time labouring hard to cultivate his mind, and acquire whatever information was within his reach. But his opportunities were very confined. He had studied Shakespeare with the greatest ardour, and with some advantage to himself in his profession. Polonius was the character in which he was most successful: he also played Hamlet, and other parts, of which he was but an indifferent representative. I have been told, that Mr. Holcroft's acting, both in its excellences and defects, more resembled Bensley's than any other person's. The excellent sense and judgment of that able actor were almost entirely deprived of their effect, by his disadvantages of voice and manner. Mr. Holcroft, in the performance of grave parts, had the same distinct, but harsh articulation, and the same unbending stiffness of deportment.

After wandering for seven years as an itinerant actor, with no very brilliant success, he resolved upon trying his fortune in London, and arrived there early in the latter end of 1777. His stay with the last company, which he joined, must therefore have been short. His separation from this company was I believe in some measure hastened by little disagreeable circumstances, but it was no doubt chiefly owing to the general bias of his inclination, to the desire and expectation of fame of some sort or other, either theatrical or literary, on which his mind had for some years been brooding. It is not likely that his success on the stage, though it might in time have ensured him a livelihood in inferior parts, would ever have been such as to satisfy the ambition of an aspiring and vigorous mind. It was, however, on his talents as an actor, that he first rested his hopes of pushing his fortune in London, and of recommending himself to the favour of the public. But before we follow him up to town, it may not be improper to take a retrospect of the path we have already trod. There are some persons of nice tastes, who may perhaps be disgusted with the meanness of his adventures; and who may think the situation in which he embarked in life, and the society into whose characters and manners he seems to have entered with so much relish, unworthy of a man of genius.

But it should be recollected, first, that men of genius do not always chuse their own profession or pursuit. In Mr. Holcroft's case, the question was, whether he should turn strolling player, or starve.

Secondly, there are in this very profession, which is held in such contempt, circumstances which must make a man of genius, not very averse to enter into it. In spite of the real misery, meanness, ignorance, and folly, often to be found among its followers, the player as well as the poet, lives in an ideal world.

The scenes of petty vexation, poverty, and disappointment, which he has to encounter, are endless; so are the scenes of grandeur, pomp, and pleasure, in which he is as constantly an actor. If his waking thoughts are sometimes disagreeable, his dreams are delightful, and the business of his life is to dream. This may be a reason why every one else should shun this profession as a pest, but it is for this very reason that the man of genius may pass his time pleasantly and profitably in it. But let us hear Mr. Holcroft's apology for his former way of life, which seems to have been dictated with a view to his own feelings. 'Know then,' he says,[1] 'there is a certain set or society of men, frequently to be met in straggling parties about this kingdom, who by a peculiar kind of magic, will metamorphose an old barn, stable, or out-house, in such a wonderful manner, that the said barn, stable, or out-house, shall appear, according as it suits the will or purpose of the said magicians, at one time a prince's palace; at another, a peasant's cottage; now the noisy receptacle of drunken clubs, and wearied travellers, called an inn; anon the magnificent dome of a Grecian temple. Nay, so vast is their art, that, by pronouncing audibly certain sentences, which are penned down for them by the head, or master magician, they transpōrt the said barn, stable, or out-house, thus metamorphosed, over sea, or land, rocks, mountains, or deserts, into whatsoever hot, cold, or temperate region the director wills, with as much facility as my lady's squirrel can crack a nut-shell. What is still more wonderful, they carry all their spectators along with them, without the witchery of broom-sticks. These necromancers, although whenever they please they become princes, kings, and heroes, and reign over all the empires of the vast and peopled earth; though they bestow governments, vice-royalties, and principalities, upon their adherents, divide the spoils of nations among their pimps, pages, and parasites, and give a kingdom for a kiss, for they are exceedingly amorous; yet, no sooner do their sorceries cease, though but the moment before they were revelling and banqueting with Marc Antony, or quaffing nectar with Jupiter himself, it is a safe wager of a pound to a penny that half of them go supperless to bed. A set of poor, but pleasant rogues! miserable, but merry wags!

[1] *Hugh Trevor*, vol. iii.

that weep without sorrow, stab without anger, die without dread, and laugh, sing, and dance, to inspire mirth in others, while surrounded themselves with wretchedness. A thing still more remarkable in these enchanters is, that they completely effect their purpose, and make those, who delight in observing the wonderful effects of their art, laugh or cry, condemn or admire, love or hate, just as they please; subjugating the heart with every various passion: more especially when they pronounce the charms and incantations of a certain sorcerer, called Shakespeare, whose science was so powerful, that he himself thus describes it:

——I have oft be-dimm'd
The noon-tide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds, etc.'

CHAPTER VI

Mr. Holcroft arrived in London, just at the time that Mr. Sheridan came into the management of Drury-Lane. He endeavoured to procure an engagement at this, and at the other house; but in vain. As a last desperate resource, when his money was nearly exhausted, he sat down and wrote a farce, called The Crisis, or Love and Famine which Mrs. Sheridan was prevailed on to read; and this, with his musical knowledge (as he was able to sing in all choruses), procured him an engagement at twenty shillings a week. On his being engaged, Mr. Holcroft was desired by Mr. Sheridan to give in his cast of parts to Mr. Hopkins, the prompter; and they were as follow:

Don Manuel, ...	Kind Impostor.
Hardcastle, ...	She Stoops to Conquer.
Justice Woodcock, . . .	Love in a Village.
Hodge, ...	Ditto.
Giles, ...	Maid of the Mill.
Ralph, ...	Ditto.
Sir Harry Sycamore, . . .	Ditto.
Scrub, ...	Beaux' Stratagem.
Sir Anthony Absolute, . .	Rivals.
General Savage, ...	School for Wives.
Colin Macleod, ...	Faithless Lover.
Mortimer, ...	Ditto.
Sir Benjamin Dove, . . .	Brothers.
Major O'Flaherty, . . .	West-Indian.
Fulmer, ...	Ditto.
Varland, ...	Ditto.
Colonel Oldboy, . . .	Lionel and Clarissa.

It was in this last part that Mr. Holcroft particularly wished to have made his first appearance. The manner in which he procured a recommendation to Mrs. Sheridan, was through his cousin, Mrs. Greville. In consequence of this connexion, he also obtained introductions to Mrs. Crewe, and several other persons of fashion, who interested themselves in his behalf; and an epistolary intercourse commenced between him and Mr. Greville on subjects of taste and the theatre, which continued for some years.

His farce of the Crisis was, I believe, played but once, for the benefit of Hopkins, the prompter, when it was favourably received. This Mr. Hopkins, who had the regulation of the inferior parts in the theatre, entertained a very low opinion of Mr. Holcroft's powers as an actor; and he remained unnoticed, till Mr. Sheridan by chance saw him in the part of Mungo, with which he was so much pleased as to order his weekly salary to be raised to five and twenty shillings. Both his salary and his reputation in the theatre seem now to have remained stationary during this and the following season, though he constantly attended the theatre to perform the most menial parts. The following extract from a letter addressed to Mr. Sheridan, will sufficiently explain both his situation and feelings at this time:—

'Depressed, dejected, chained by Misfortune to the rock of Despair, while the vultures Poverty and Disappointment are feasting with increase of appetite upon me, I have no chance of deliverance but from you. You, Sir, I hope, will be my Alcides! Mr. Evans says, he must increase the deductions he already makes from my salary (9s. per week), unless I can obtain your order to the contrary. It is scarcely possible I should maintain my family, which will shortly be increased, upon my present income. Were I not under deductions at the office, my receipts would very little exceed sixty pounds a year; and this I enjoy more through your favour than any consequence I am of to the theatre, though continually employed. But then it is either to sit in a senate or at a card-table, or to walk in a procession, or to sing in a chorus, which is all that the prompter, who has the direction of this kind of business, thinks me capable of. Nay, in so little esteem am I held by Mr. Hopkins, that he took the part of a dumb steward in Love for Love from another person, and made me do it; and when by your permission I played Mawworm, he said, had he been well and up, it should not have been so. I do not mention this as a subject of accusation against Mr. Hopkins, but merely to shew that if I am consigned to his penetration, I am doomed to everlasting oblivion.

'Unhappily for me, when I performed Mawworm, you were not at the theatre. Interest rather than vanity makes me say, I was more successful than I had any reason to expect. The audience were in a continual laugh. I played Jerry Sneak for my own benefit last year, and with the same success; and if I could only be introduced to the town in old men and burletta singing, I know from former experience how soon I should be held in a very different estimation from what I am at present. You do not know, Sir, how useful I could be upon a thousand emergencies in the theatre, if I were but thought of; but this I shall never be till your express mandate is issued for that purpose.

'You have frequently been pleased to express a partiality towards me, as well as a favourable opinion of my abilities. But, sir, if you do not immediately interest yourself in my behalf, I may grow grey, while I enjoy your favour without a possibility of confirming or increasing it. "Who's the Dupe" prevented the Crisis from being played last year: now you tell me you will talk to me after Christmas; in the meantime "the Flitch of Bacon" and a new pantomime are preparing. I told those to whom I am indebted, I should have a chance of paying them soon, for that the Crisis would come out before the holidays. When I said so, I believed that it would; but they will think I meant to deceive them.'

The concluding sentence of this letter is remarkable, when we recollect the character of the celebrated man to whom it is addressed.

'In short, I am arrived at the labyrinth of delays, where suspense and all his busy imps are tormenting me—*You alone, Sir, hold the clue that can guide me out of it.*'

Mr. Sheridan, in spite of Mr. Holcroft's entreaties, was not inclined on this occasion to perform the part of Theseus; for he was still left to the mercy of the remorseless prompter, and had no opportunity of exerting his talents till the Camp came out (in 1780) when he endeavoured, as he expresses himself, *to make a part* of a foolish recruit, and succeeded; in consequence of which his salary was raised to thirty shillings weekly.

During the summer recesses of the years 1778 and 1779, Mr. Holcroft had not been idle, but had made excursions to the Canterbury, Portsmouth, and Nottingham theatres, where he moved in a higher range of parts, and escaped from the drudgery of choruses and processions. The state of his health appears to have been one inducement for his leaving town in 1779; for he says in a letter, dated from Nottingham, in June, that but for this consideration, he believes it would have been more profitable for him to have remained in London. In these excursions he seems to have established a pretty intimate correspondence with a Mr. Hughes, the Portsmouth or Plymouth manager; for we find the latter writing to him for a supply of performers, and Mr. Holcroft in answer complaining of his being able only to meet with a Mrs. Hervey, of whom he gives a very satirical portrait, and a Mr. Cubit, a singer, who, he observes, had already been with Mr. Hughes, and who never visited a company twice.

Mr. Holcroft's business at the theatre, did not hinder him from pursuing his literary avocations. Besides the Crisis, he had already written two other after-pieces, the Shepherdess of the Alps, and the Maid of the Vale.

The following letter to Mrs. Sheridan, gives an account of the first of these:

'MADAM, It is with a peculiar pleasure that I have, by Mr. Sheridan's desire, an opportunity of addressing you. I am indebted to your benevolence and interposition, for my first obtaining admission in the theatre, and shall ever remember it with respect and gratitude. Give me leave, Madam, to intrude upon your patience for a moment, while I explain the motive of this address.—Mrs. Greville, Mrs. Crewe, and some other ladies of fashion and consequence, have kindly undertaken to patronize, and recommend the Shepherdess of the Alps. Mrs. Crewe has spoken to Mr. Sheridan concerning it, as he informed me last night, desiring me at the same time, to send it to you, who he said would not only read it yourself, but put him in mind of it. I believe myself almost certain of your good wishes, when you read the beginning, and recollect that your late dear and worthy brother pointed out the subject to me, encouraged me to pursue it, and had not only undertaken to set it, but had actually composed two songs. Pardon me, Madam, for introducing so melancholy a reflection. His esteem for me, I might almost say his friendship, shall never be forgotten, let my condition in life hereafter be what it may; it does me too much honour. You likewise, Madam, have some share in the work: it was in consequence of your advice and observations, that the comic part was introduced: it was at first intended only to affect the nobler passions, and to have been entirely serious.—I would not willingly appear too urgent: yet cannot forbear expressing some anxiety about the fate of my poor Shepherdess. I spent all the summer about it, (certain as I thought then) of its coming out immediately.—I am, Madam,' etc.

The Maid of the Vale was a translation from the Italian comic opera of La Buona Figliola, which Mr. Arne, the son of Dr. Arne, employed him to alter and adapt to the English stage.

A good deal of altercation seems to have taken place between the author and musician respecting the division of the future profits of the piece; Mr. Holcroft claiming one half, to which his employer did not think him by any means entitled. In consequence, I believe, of these disagreements, the piece was not brought forward.

Mr. Holcroft afterwards offered his translation of this opera to Mr. King, the late actor, at that time manager of Sadler's Wells, by whom it was rejected. Mr. Holcroft, however, wrote several little pieces for Mr. King, which were brought out at this theatre. The Noble Peasant (which afterwards came out at the Haymarket,) was originally intended to have been acted here. Mr. Holcroft always experienced from this gentleman the most liberal and friendly treatment, and was under considerable pecuniary obligations to him. Mr. Foote died in October, 1777, a few weeks before Mr. Holcroft came to town. In the spring of the following year, he published an Elegy on his Death, which was the first composition of his, that had appeared in print, (since his essays in the Whitehall Evening Post). It met with a favourable reception. He had always respected the character of Foote, had been personally known to him, and lamented his death in terms dictated by real feeling, as much as by the inspiration of the muse. At the same time, he published a short poem on Old Age, which was bound up with the elegy. In April 1779, I find him desiring his father, who lived at Bath, to make inquiries respecting the prizes given at the Bath Easton Vase, the subjects proposed, and the length of the poems. 'I have an inclination,' he says, 'to become a candidate for fame at that temple of Apollo, *not so much from a supposition that I shall gain the laurel, as because I think the plan deserves encouragement.*' The little deceptions of self-love, cannot but sometimes excite a smile.—It may be proper to notice here, that Mr. Holcroft kept up at this period a constant correspondence with his father, whose wife rented a small house and garden, either at or in the neighbourhood of Bath. The letters that passed between them, do honour to the feelings of both parties. Mr. Holcroft was always eager to communicate the news of any good fortune that had befallen him, and ready to lend every assistance in his power to his father, who was still frequently in pecuniary difficulties. From one of these letters, it appears that Mr. Holcroft, among other employments, had engaged to write a paper, called the Actor, for the Westminster Magazine, and that he was secretary to a society, (the theatrical fund,) for which he received ten pounds a year. He also found time to write songs for Vauxhall, several of which became very popular. Among these, the greatest favourite was the ballad, beginning, 'Down the Bourne and through the Mead,' which was set to music by Shield. This song, which is written in the Scottish dialect, has often been taken for an old Scotch ballad, and has been actually printed in a collection of Scotch songs.—Mr. Holcroft was one evening drinking tea with some friends at White-Conduit House, when the organ was playing the tune of Johnny and Mary. After they had listened some time, a person in the next box began to descant rather learnedly on the beauty of the Scotch airs, and the tenderness and simplicity of their popular poetry, bringing this very ballad as an illustration of his argument, neither the words nor music of which, he said, any one now living was capable of imitating. Mr. Holcroft on this, took occasion to remark the strange force of prejudice, and turning to the gentleman, interrupted his argument by informing him, that he himself was the author of the song in question, and that the tune was composed by his friend, Mr. Shield, who I believe was also there present.—This song had been composed for, and was originally sung at Vauxhall, by the celebrated Nan Catley. An Irish music-seller, at the St. Paul's Head in the Strand, had procured the words and music, and had advertised them in his window to be sold. Mr. Shield was accidentally passing, saw the music in the window, and went in to demand by what right the advertiser meant to publish his property. To this he received for answer, 'By a very good right, for that the music was composed by him (the vender,) and that the words had been written by a friend, for Miss Catley, whom he very well knew.' It was with difficulty that Mr. Shield by informing him that he was the author of the music, prevailed on the pretended composer to relinquish his claim.

Mr. Holcroft, almost on his coming to town, married his third wife; and soon after, she and Mr. Holcroft determined upon taking a small house, and furnishing it. They were, however, diverted from this plan by a Mr. Turner, an upholsterer, in Oxford Road, who persuaded them that it would be much more advantageous to take a large house, which he would furnish, and give them credit for any length of time they demanded. He said, that many persons by letting the upper part of their houses, not only cleared their rent, but were often gainers. These arguments, and the additional motive of making a more creditable appearance, induced Mr. Holcroft to take a house in Southampton Buildings, which Mr. Turner furnished as he had promised, to the value of 240l. But scarcely were the goods lodged in the house, before the upholsterer became a bankrupt, and his effects and bills were consigned over to his creditors, who immediately came on Mr. Holcroft for 160l., 80l. having been at first advanced to Mr. Turner for the furniture. This unexpected stroke completely ruined the prospects of our young house-keepers, and they were obliged to apply to several persons to prevent an execution, which was threatened. Mr. Holcroft might indeed have sold his goods for nearly the amount of the debt against him: but it seems that he was unwilling to see his property melt away under the hands of an auctioneer, and to have to begin the world again, after having, in a manner, realized all his hopes, by attaining a permanent and respectable establishment in life. He wrote to several persons to assist him in this emergency, with a degree of importunity which can only be excused by the severity of his disappointment, and a sense that it was undeserved on his part. He wrote to Mr. Greville, to a Mr. Laurel, to Mr. Sheridan, to the Proprietors of Drury-Lane, to persons whom he had never seen or known, with a kind of wild desperation. These applications indeed shewed no great knowledge of the world; but the abrupt appeals which he thus made to the humanity and generosity of others, at least proved that Mr. Holcroft was not without a strong sense of these qualities in his own breast, which made him believe they might be found to a romantic degree in others. His friend, Mr. King, at length relieved him from his immediate embarrassments by a loan of 80 or 100l. This, however, was to be repaid; and at no great distance of time, the same difficulties, and the same struggles to extricate himself from them returned. At one time, great hopes were entertained from the expected arrival of a Mr. Marsac, a near relation of his wife, who had a handsome appointment in India; and who, in their present situation, it was thought, would be willing to assist them. But he did not arrive within the time which had been fixed. Mr. Holcroft then wrote to a lady, high in rank and literary pretension, but a stranger to him, stating the circumstances of his case, and inclosing a comedy, which he had written as a voucher for the justice of his claims: she had been the laborious patroness of departed genius, and he thought might be the friend of living merit. But it seems, the inference was not justified by the event. The comedy was returned unread: and, indeed, if she had read it, a very favourable verdict could scarcely have been expected, under the annexed penalty of a hundred pounds. Mr. Holcroft has recorded this extravagance and its result among the adventures of Wilmot, the usher, in Hugh Trevor. Mr. Holcroft now looked forward, as a last resource, to the success of the comedy itself (Duplicity) which was afterwards acted with applause; but such was the author's untoward fate, that even his success was attended with little advantage, and relieved his necessities but in part.

Mr. Holcroft had, at this time, few friends or acquaintance in London, and those few were very little able to afford him any material assistance. The oldest were Shield and P——, both of whom he had known in strolling companies in the North: they had separated, had come to London about the same time, and met by chance. Shield first discovered Holcroft poring over an old bookstall, in Goodge-Street: they immediately recognized each other with a good deal of pleasure, and a friendly intercourse commenced, which was uninterrupted to the last. When the place of composer of the birth-day minuets at court became vacant by the death of Mr. Weideman, Mr. Holcroft applied to Mr. Greville to procure the place for Mr. Shield; with what success I do not know.

Mr. Shield at the period we are speaking of, had an engagement at the Opera-house. It was winter, and in consequence of some new piece, they had very long rehearsals every morning. One day he was detained longer than usual, his dinner-hour was over, he felt himself very cold when he came out, and his attendance for so many hours had sharpened his appetite. He therefore proceeded up the Hay-market with a determination to get some refreshment at the first place that offered. He had strolled into St. Martin's-lane, without meeting with any thing that he liked: till he came to a little bye-court, called Porridge Island; at the corner of which, in a dark, dirty-looking window, he discovered a large round of beef smoking, which strongly seconded the disposition he already felt in himself to satisfy his hunger. He did not, however, much like the appearance of the place: he looked again, the temptation grew stronger, and at last he ventured in. Having asked for dinner, he was shewn into a room up one pair of stairs, not very large, but convenient and clean, where he found several persons already set down to dinner. He was invited to join them, and to his great joy found both the fare and the accommodation excellent. But his attention was shortly much more powerfully arrested by the conversation which took place at the table. Philosophy, religion, politics, poetry, the belles lettres were talked of, and in such a manner, as to shew that every person there was familiar with such subjects, and that they formed the ordinary topics of conversation. Mr. Shield listened in a manner which denoted his surprise and pleasure. The conversation at one time began to take rather a free turn, when a grave, elderly looking man, who sat at the head of the table, addressed the new guest, telling him that he seemed a young man, and by his countenance shewed some signs of grace; that he would not have him mind what was said by persons who scarcely believed their own sophisms; that he himself when young had been attacked and staggered by the same objections; that he had examined them all, and found them all false and hollow. This diverted the discourse to other subjects which were more agreeable. The name of the person who had thus addressed Mr. Shield, and who thus assumed the office of a censor, was Cannon: he was the son of an Irish bishop. He was advanced in years, and presided in the company with an air of authority that was partly submitted to in earnest, and partly humoured for the joke's sake. He regularly dined here every day. On entering the room, he first pulled off his great coat, and fastened it with two long pins to the back of a tall cane-worked old chair with knobs behind: and after disposing of his umbrella, which in those days was a great singularity, he used to pay his respects to the company with much formality, and then sat down. He had one place, which was always kept for him; and for this privilege it seems he paid double price. If any stranger came in by chance, and took possession of his seat, he would never sit down in any other, but walked up and down the room in a restless way, till the person was gone. It was his constant custom to carry with him a small pocket volume of Milton, or Young's Night Thoughts, in which he had made a great number of marginal notes; and as soon as dinner was over, he regularly took out one of his favourite authors, and opening the book at random, requested the person who sat next him, whether a stranger, or one of the usual company, to read aloud a certain passage which he thought very beautiful. This offer was of course declined by those who knew him, who in return begged that he would favour the company with it himself, which he did, at the same time repeating the remarks which he had made in the margin. He then very deliberately closed the book, and put it into his pocket again. Cannon was a man of letters, and had travelled. He spoke a very florid language, full of epithets and compound words, and professed to be engaged in an edition of Tibullus. Mr. Shield was so much amused with this old gentleman, and interested in the general conversation, (not to say that the commons were excellent), that he was determined he would in future dine no where else: he was also eager to inform Holcroft of the discovery he had made, whom he invited to go along with him the next day, and who also became a very constant visitor. The persons who were generally present were Messieurs Shield, Nicholson, Holcroft, Cannon, etc., who formed themselves into a little society, which in compliment to the last mentioned person, was called 'The Cannonian.' The president was rather tenacious of his opinions, and impatient of contradiction; and frequently some very warm altercations took place in consequence between him and Mr. Holcroft.

The other friend of Mr. Holcroft, mentioned above, was a young Scotchman, who had been in Booth's company with him, but soon quitted it, and came up to London two or three years before him.

They had had a violent quarrel while they were in this company, but meeting again in London, with new objects before them, and where they were both to a considerable degree strangers, former disagreements were forgotten, and a friendly intercourse commenced. He strenuously advised Holcroft to turn his thoughts to writing, or reporting for the newspapers, which he himself had found a lucrative employment, which Holcroft declined, being more bent on pushing his way at the theatre.

The manner in which this friend of our author began his career in life, deserves a place in a work which is little else than a history of the difficulties and successes which attend the efforts of men of talents and literature.

Mr. P——, whose connexions were respectable, came to town, with recommendations to a banking-house in the city, and with an intention to get a place as clerk in some counting-house, or public office. He delivered his letters, and his friends promised they would be on the look-out for him. He called once or twice to no purpose, and as his time hung rather idly on his hands, he had employed himself in writing one or two anonymous letters on the politics of the day, which were inserted in the General Advertiser. It so happened that one of the partners in the house to which he had been recommended, had a principal share in this very paper: and when he called, he told him that he had heard of nothing in the way that he wished; but taking out the Advertiser, and shewing him his own letter in it, 'If now,' said he, 'you could do something of this kind, I might possibly be of service to you.' Mr. P—— replied, with some eagerness, that he was the author of the letter. 'Aye, indeed,' says the other, 'then come with me; we must have some farther talk together.' So saying, he took our young politician with him into another room; and after being closeted some time, it was arranged that P—— should be immediately employed as a writer and reporter for this paper, at a guinea and half a week. The very next night there was to be an important debate in the house, and our young gentleman was to make his *coup d'essai*. As however he was entirely ignorant of the forms and rules of reporting, it was thought necessary to give him some previous instructions; and he was told, that he should place himself so as to be able to hear the speakers distinctly; that he should provide himself with a pencil and pocket-book, in which he must note down the speeches as privately as he could; but that as he was a stranger, and might be noticed the more on that account, if any one came to interrupt him, he was to say nothing, but put half a guinea into his hand. Thus equipped and instructed, Mr. P—— went early to his post, and planted himself in the middle of the gallery, directly in front of the speaker. He had his pencil and pocket-book ready in his hand, and the instant the debate opened, began to take notes with so much eagerness, and so little precaution, that a messenger came to him, and said, 'Sir, you must give over writing.' As he had been prepared for this event, he took the half-guinea out of his pocket, and bending his hand behind him, offered the half-guinea, which was lodged in the palm of it, to the door-keeper, who took it without saying a word, and the other went on with his writing as before. But no sooner had he begun, than the man very quietly tapped him on the shoulder again, and said, 'Sir, you must give over writing.' This second rebuff was quite unexpected, and completely disconcerted our zealous reporter. He put his pencil and paper in his pocket, and sat during the remainder of the debate in a state of the utmost confusion, not expecting to remember a single sentence. He went home and related his ill-success; professing his inability to give any account of what he had heard. 'But,' said his employer, 'you may at least try: you must surely recollect something of what passed.' He said, 'no: he had been in such a state of agitation the whole time, that it would be in vain to attempt it.' As no one else had gone from the same office, and it was absolutely necessary to give some account of the debate the next morning, he was again urged to make the attempt, and at length complied. He was left in the room by himself, and scarcely knowing what he did, began an account of the speech of Lord Nugent, who had opened the question. He was surprised to find that he could recollect the few first sentences. Still he despaired of being able to proceed; but by degrees, one thing recalled another, he still kept writing on without knowing what was to follow, and when he had finished one page, sent it down to the press. His hopes now began to revive, he returned to the charge, and writing under an apprehension that the words might every minute escape from his memory, he despatched sheet after sheet so vigorously, that the press could hardly keep pace with him. They had now printed two columns and a half, and Lord Nugent was still speaking. At last, the proprietor, who had at first dreaded a dearth of information, and whose fears were now alarmed the contrary way, came up to him, and said, 'My G—d, when will this Lord Nugent's speech be done? Was there no other speaker the whole evening?' 'Oh yes, there are seven or eight more to come.' The other laughed, and told P—— that he had quite mistaken the business; that in his way of going on, he would fill a volume instead of a newspaper, and that he must begin again entirely, and instead of giving every word and sentence, merely repeat the heads of each speech, and a few of the most striking arguments. "Oh, is that all you want," exclaimed P——, greatly relieved from his terrors, "then I'm your man." Accordingly he set to work afresh, cut down Lord Nugent into half a column, and the other speakers had a proportionable space allotted them; and the report, thus curtailed, was the next day noticed as the clearest and fullest that had been given of the debate. The person, to whom this anecdote relates, has been long known to the public as the editor and proprietor of the only constitutional paper that remains.

BOOK III

CHAPTER I

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commence comedian. Young Stamford, Maria's brother, is alone in the secret, and is the person to whom Alwyn addresses the account of his subsequent adventures. Mr. Hilkirk, on whose story our author has chosen to ingraft his own, in like manner, falls in love with his master's niece, is on this account, and for his frequenting spouting clubs and billiard rooms, discarded from his service as a clerk, and betakes himself to the stage. These two romantic youths correspond together, and endeavour to console one another, by comparing their mutual mishaps,—the pains of absence, poverty, and hopeless love. Alwyn proceeds to Kendal, where he is received by the inhabitants with extraordinary marks of attention; is supposed to be a gentleman in disguise; is envied by the players; and being invited to the assembly (a distinction never before allowed to any comedian), dances with a young, rich, lively widow, a West-Indian, who falls in love with him, and makes him an offer of her hand and fortune. This the youth politely declines, his affections being irrevocably engaged to another; and, in consequence of this, the lady being piqued by his refusal, enters into a plot against him in concert with one of the players (a veteran in the corps, who was offended that the part of Romeo, which he had played *for fifty years*, should be taken from him, and given to Alwyn). His pocket-book is searched; the name of the lady's rival is discovered; and a letter is dispatched to old Stamford, informing him of the liberties which Mr. Alwyn is said to have taken with his daughter's name, and the equal presumption he had shewn in paying his addresses to the anonymous writer of the epistle. This letter, which is believed, gives a death-blow to his hopes. Maria Stamford, who had secretly returned his passion, is ashamed of her folly; the father is shocked; and the brother is incensed at the baseness and ingratitude of his friend. Another lover is now provided for Alwyn's mistress, the son of a Mr. Maitland, a rattling, thoughtless young fellow, who is not half sentimental enough for the young lady; and is accordingly rejected by her. The father of young Maitland is represented as an odd character, a half-crazy humourist, who, like the people of Laputa, makes every thing a subject of mathematical demonstration. He calculates the height and size of meteors, and is made to follow every *ignis fatuus* that he sees, through bog and briar. His graceless son ties a lantern to the house-dog's tail, and sends his father on a bootless chace after it: the dog escapes from his keeper, gets in at the library window with his meteorological apparatus about him, and sets fire to the house. Maitland-Hall is converted into a heap of ruins; and what is worse, Mr. Maitland's strong-box, containing nearly all his property, is lost. Mr. Stamford, his son, and daughter, are on a visit there at the time; and Maria Stamford must have perished in the flames, but that Alwyn, the ungrateful, the supposed worthless Alwyn, who had left the Kendal company, and was travelling homeward, happens, at that instant, to be passing by, and comes in time to rescue his lovely mistress from the flames. He however remains unknown, and pursues his journey. Tom Maitland's fortune being thus dissipated by his frolic, it becomes a point of honour that Maria should give up her scruples, and join her hand to his; when this, now almost inevitable event, is put a stop to by a discovery,—that it was not the dog Pompey that had set fire to the house, but a gang of thieves, who had committed this flagrant act in order to carry off old Maitland's strong box: that they had been detected, and their prize secured by the vigilance and activity of Alwyn's friend, Hilkirk, who now appears to be the son of his former master, Seldon, and who is rewarded with the hand of his old sweet-heart, Julia Gowland, for the difficulties he has had to encounter, and to which he was purposely exposed by his father to enable him to bear adversity, and make a man of him. At the same time, Alwyn is recognized by a rich uncle, who adopts him as his heir; the story of the anonymous letter, and of his pretended treachery, is cleared up, and the whole ends happily in marriage.

There is in this story neither much probability nor much invention. The characters, such as they are, are tolerably supported: but some of the attempts at humour which are inserted, shock all common sense. Such are the accounts of the school-master, the methodist parson, the mathematical calculation of the reasons for marrying, etc. These however were not written by Holcroft, but by his friend. The reason, why men of real and great abilities do not succeed in different kinds of writing, is perhaps, less for want of power, than of industry and inclination. They naturally set the highest value on that department of taste or genius, to which they have devoted themselves, and they have not respect enough for any other to take the pains necessary to excel in it. Thus the philosopher and man of science is apt to think he pays a sufficient compliment to the efforts of humour or fancy, if he only unbends his mind to engage in them; that any thing is good enough for a novel, or poem; and that the absence of wisdom is wit.

The character of Handford, Alwyn's uncle, is the most amusing and original in the work: let it speak for itself.

This gentleman had conceived the idea of establishing a humane asylum for animals, the consequences of which he describes thus:

'I am pestered, plagued, teazed, tormented to death. I believe all the cats in Christendom are assembled in Oxfordshire. I am obliged to hire a clerk to pay the people, and the village where I live, is become a constant fair. A fellow has set up the sign of the three Blind Kittens, and has the impudence to tell the neighbours, that if my whims and my money only hold out for one twelve-month, he shall not care a fig for the king. I thought to prevent this inundation, by buying up all the old cats, and secluding them in convents and monasteries of my own: but the value of the breeders is increased to such a degree, that I do not believe my whole fortune is capable of the purchase.—Besides, I am made an ass of. A rascal, who is a known sharper in these parts, hearing of the aversion I had to cruelty, bought an old, one-eyed horse, that was going to the dogs, for five shillings. Then taking a hammer in his hand, watched an opportunity of finding me alone, and addressed me in the following manner: "Look you, master, I know that you don't love to see any dumb creature abused, and so, if you don't give me ten pounds, why I shall scoop out this old rip's odd eye, with the sharp end of this here hammer, now, before your face." Aye, and the villain would have done it too, if I had not instantly complied: but what was worse, the abominable scoundrel had the audacity to tell me, when I wanted him to deliver the horse first, for fear he should extort a farther sum from me, that he had more honour than to break his word. A whelp of a boy had yesterday caught a young hedgehog, and perceiving me, threw it into the water to make it extend its legs; then with the rough side of a knotty stick, sawed upon them till the creature cried like a child; and when I ordered him to desist, told me he would not, till I had given him six-pence. There is something worse than all this. The avaricious rascals, when they can find nothing that they think will excite my pity, disable the first animal which is not dignified with the title of christian; and then bring it to me as an object worthy of commiseration; so that in fact, instead of protecting, I destroy. The women have entertained a notion that I hate two-legged animals: and one of them called after me the other day, to tell me I was an old rogue, and that I had better give my money to the poor, than keep a parcel of dogs and cats that eat up the village. I perceive it is in vain to attempt carrying on the scheme much longer, and then my poor invalids will be worse off than they were before.'

This account was probably intended by the author as an indirect satire upon his friend Ritson's arguments on the inhumanity of eating animal food.

Mr. Holcroft may now be considered as having commenced regular author; or in other words, he now began to write constantly for the booksellers. He was employed by them to write a pamphlet, under the name of Wm. Vincent, Esq. of Gray's Inn, containing an account of the riots in 1780. For this purpose he had attended the trials at the Old Bailey, where he was the means of saving the life of an innocent man, who was brought there as a prisoner. I have heard Mr. Holcroft mention this circumstance, with tears of pleasure at the recollection. One of his most habitual feelings was a strong sense of the value of human life; and his having been in more than one instance an instrument in saving it, was a subject of the most grateful reflection to him.

A young man was brought to the bar, and tried as one of the rioters. The witness against him swore, that as he was standing in a shop, where he had taken refuge, at the bottom of Holborn, he saw the prisoner coming down Holborn Hill, at the head of a body of rioters, with a drawn sword in his hand, which he brandished furiously in the air. The witness swore positively to the facts, and there is little doubt that the prisoner would have been found guilty, if by great good fortune Mr. Holcroft, who was taking notes of the evidence, had not recollected the prisoner's face. He felt himself much agitated while the evidence was giving; and when it was over, he addressed the judge, and begged that he might be admitted as an evidence, for that he had something very material to depose to the prisoner's innocence. He then declared that he had been present at the real transaction; that he had been standing at the corner of one of the streets near the bottom of Holborn, when the rioters passed; that the prisoner was not one of them, but that some time after they were gone by, he had seen the prisoner, who was walking quietly along the street, pick up a sword, which had probably been dropped in some scuffle by one of the rioters, and carry it away with him. This he said was the whole of the transaction, and that the circumstances of his marching at the head of the mob, and brandishing the sword in a threatening manner, were utterly false. This evidence was so clear and satisfactory, that the man was acquitted. Loughborough was the judge on this occasion. Mr. Holcroft used to mention another anecdote which happened at the same time, when the prisoners were tried and convicted in that wholesale way, and upon such slender evidence, that it was not easy for them to escape, whether guilty or not. A man with a strong, stern, sensible countenance, after sentence of condemnation had been passed upon him, muttered to himself, in a scarcely audible voice, and evidently without intending to excite any one's notice; 'Short and sweet—innocent by G—d!'

CHAPTER II

Mr. Holcroft's first comedy, called Duplicity, was acted in October, 1781. It had been offered to Mr. Harris, and came out at Covent Garden. The prologue was written by Mr. Nicholson. The applause it met with, both on the first night and afterwards, was very great. Mr. Holcroft's feelings on this occasion he has expressed in a manner honourable to himself in a letter to Mr. Greville, dated October 18, the day after it was acted.

'Sir, I received your very obliging letter last night, just as I was going to the theatre, and had not time to answer it till to-day. Indeed, Sir, I do not find myself so much flattered by the very favourable opinion which, as far as I am able to come at the truth, the town entertains of me, as I am by your friendship and kindness. It is true I have had great difficulties to encounter, and the unhappy effects of a narrow education to surmount: but to be thus distinguished is more than a compensation for the labour I have taken, and the conflicts I have had with poverty, obscurity, and their dismal attendants. I am successful—I am happy—I shall acquire the means of making my father, my family, and some of my friends happy. These are the purest sources of pleasure, and which, as I have reason to know, both you and Mrs. Greville most intimately feel. My greatest danger is the possibility of not supporting the new character I have undertaken, with that equanimity, moderation, and ease, which are so essential to real worth. Vanity is continually spreading the net for pride, and those who are never entrapped, are either very strong or very cunning. To be successful, I have now only to be industrious: having escaped the Dog of Hell, the Elysian Fields are before me, if I have but taste and prudence to select the sweets. But this egotism is a species of the folly I have been declaiming against.'

Mr. Greville, it may be necessary to add here, had perused Mr. Holcroft's piece before it came out, and had suggested some alterations both in the plot and language. Several were also made by Mr. Holcroft in the course of the rehearsals, and more by Mr. Harris; some of them against the author's judgment.

Mr. Holcroft now considered his fame as established, and his fortune as already made. The author of a successful and admired comedy he thought had a passport which would carry him securely through the world. In these flattering hopes, he was unhappily deceived.

He also wrote on the same day to his father, in terms which his success and the warmth of his affection dictated.

'My Dear Father, I know that a short letter will be acceptable to you rather than none, especially on this occasion. My piece is come out at Covent Garden Theatre under the title of Duplicity. You may perhaps have heard some account of its reception from the newspapers: its success has been very flattering, and no circumstance relative to it gives me more satisfaction than that I shall now be enabled to provide for my dear father.'

Only three days after the date of the preceding letters, his brilliant prospects were dissipated, and we find him addressing the following letter to Mr. Harris.

2630 RIDGE ROAD
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

'Sir, It is with reluctance I begin to write to you on the present subject: but my feelings are too powerful to be resisted. My labours have been great; my cares, hopes, and fears innumerable, and just at the moment when I was to be rewarded, to see my golden dreams vanish, to have the blessings I had so hardly earned snatched from me, is more than I can support in silence. It is not now, Sir, vanity in me to say the comedy is deserving of reward, every body says so, many say much more, at least to me. Had it been brought out at a good time of the year, I should not have gained less than five hundred pounds by it. But to be played at the most barren of all seasons, and when the fineness of the weather concurs to make it still worse, is certainly a severe fate; and I appeal to you, Sir, whether it is a misfortune, the whole weight of which should be borne by a man who has strained every faculty, and endured every kind of mental torture to give others pleasure. Again, though I have no doubt but you thought it best, yet it is the opinion of every body that the playing the piece at intervals, so contrary to the established mode, has thrown a damp upon it of the most stagnating kind. There is not a person I meet, who does not ask the reason with a face of wonder. This you know was not with my judgment, nay, I was exceedingly vexed when I first saw another play advertised over its head. What added still more to the surprise of the town, was to hear it given out for Tuesday, and to see it put off till Wednesday, in order to give place to an old piece, of which they therefore concluded you had greater expectations than of the new comedy. They could not know your real motive. The concluding stroke thus far finishes this melancholy tragedy. You told me my night should be on the Friday or Saturday; I objected to the first, and you agreed to the other: but circumstances alter—you allege the business of the theatre—I am obliged to take the Friday, and King Arthur, with every force of novelty, dress, decoration, etc. etc. is opposed to me at a time when there is scarcely one full audience of play-going people in town. The consequence is, the profits of my first and best night are twenty pounds. I appeal to you, Sir, whether I have not a claim to some reparation. I wish you to allow me a certain sum for my nights; what, I leave to your candour. My hopes are so lowered that my views now are not very extravagant. If you think I have reason, you will be kind enough to inform me what you think proper to give; and then, Sir, you will do with the piece whatever you think fit.'

The next night that the comedy was played for the author's benefit, it did not clear the expenses of the house; and Mr. Harris then said, that unless it was commanded by the king, he should not think of playing it any more; but, at the same time, desired Mr. Holcroft to draw on the theatre for a hundred pounds. This sum, with the price which he got for it from the booksellers, was all that he cleared by this his first comedy. It was shortly after published with a very well written preface.

Mr. Harris appears to have behaved in a liberal and friendly manner on this occasion. Mr. Holcroft afterwards called on him, and he proposed that the play should be laid by for a time, till he had a strong afterpiece to play with it. This set Mr. Holcroft's imagination at work again, and he conceived the idea of writing a pastoral, and laying the scene in Ireland, so as to have an opportunity of introducing all the good Irish music. I do not know whether he ever executed this idea.

After the appearance of Duplicity, Mr. Holcroft wrote to Mr. Linley to decline singing in the choruses and oratorios. His salary had been raised by Mr. Sheridan to two pounds a week, but still Mr. Holcroft seems to have been dissatisfied with not being brought forward in considerable parts; and he entertained thoughts of going to Ireland as an actor, unless a more respectable class of characters was assigned him at the theatre. He seems to have thought it inconsistent, not only with his dignity, but with his interest, as an author, to appear only in the lowest and most insignificant parts. I ought to have mentioned above, that when his own play of Duplicity was acted at the other house, Mr. Wewitzer being taken ill, he had played the part of Vandervelt at an hour's notice, which he continued to do afterwards. He also tried to procure an engagement with Mr. Colman this year at the Haymarket, but I believe ineffectually.

A project, which about this time engaged a good deal of Mr. Holcroft's attention, and excited very sanguine hopes in him, was the pretended discovery of the polygraphic art. The person who set this plan on foot, as we have before noticed, was Booth, the manager of one of the theatrical companies to which Mr. Holcroft had belonged. He undertook, by some mechanical process, to produce copies of the old masters, such as Titian and Rubens, which, both in colour and execution, should not be distinguishable from the originals, and which were to be sold as cheap, or cheaper, than a common coloured print. This certainly was promising great things, if the performance had been answerable. Mr. Holcroft was so full of this scheme, and of the golden advantages it held out, that Booth having applied to him to assist him in it, and become a partner in the profits, he wrote to Mr. Greville, informing him of his sudden good fortune; and indeed offering him a share in so lucrative an undertaking. Mr. Greville, however, seems to have thought the success not so certain; and it was not long before Mr. Holcroft began to incline to his opinion. In his next letter to this gentleman, he confesses that he entertained some doubts on the subject, especially since he had heard that the same scheme had been tried before, and had failed; and farther, that there were not half a dozen artists in the kingdom, *who could copy the best pictures well enough to make it an object.* In fact, this last observation betrayed the real secret: after an imperfect outline, or rude sketch, had been struck off by a mechanical operation, any bungling artist, who could be found to do it cheap enough, was employed to finish the picture. So that, after all, this new mode of superseding the necessity of copying the old masters, was nothing more than an attempt to set up a cheap wholesale manufactory of bad copies of good pictures. — Mr. Holcroft, however, though his ardour very soon cooled, was willing to wait till he had seen the specimens which Mr. Booth was busy in making of some famous picture, but which he was very backward in producing. The subsequent fate of this polygraphic scheme is well known to the public. To excuse Mr. Holcroft's credulity on this occasion, it may be remarked, that it was long before he had paid any particular attention to the subject of painting; that he was really and truly a novice in the art; and, probably, would not have been much struck himself with the difference between one of these polygraphic imitations and a real Titian or Rubens.

CHAPTER III

In the years 1781 and 1782, Mr. Holcroft published a poem called the Sceptic, and the Family Picture,[1] a collection of tales, partly compiled, and partly original. Neither of these works seems to have held a very high place in his estimation. Of the former he says, in a letter to a friend, that it was written in haste; that he believes it ought to have been treated according to Horace's maxim, 'Prematur nonum in annum'; and that though he was pleased with some parts in the writing, he is afraid he should not be so in the reading of them. Of the *Tales* he says, that he did not expect to increase his reputation by them, though he hoped he should not lessen it.

About this time an offer was made him by Mr. Greville to reside in his house, which he had the good sense respectfully to decline. He observed, that it was difficult for people with the best tempers and intentions, and who are upon a perfect equality, to live together, without harbouring little disgusts, or fancying supposed neglects; and that with respect to himself, he was conscious of whims and peculiarities which it was his duty to keep behind the curtain as much as possible. His sole reason, therefore, for declining Mr. Greville's offer, he declared, was the fear of declining in his good opinion by accepting it.

His mind now teemed with dramatic projects, plots, characters, and incidents. His ambition was to write elegant comedy; and he was sensible of the disadvantages under which he laboured in this respect, both from education, and the sphere of life in which he had hitherto chiefly moved. He wished to get a nearer and more intimate view of the manners of high life, that he might be able to describe its refinements, or ridicule its absurdities, with more effect. He also wished, for the same reason, to acquaint himself, by actual observation, with foreign manners. Both these ends would be answered by obtaining admission into the Ambassador's suite, which was then (1783) setting off for Paris; and he made application to several persons of consequence for this purpose, but without obtaining his immediate object. He however so far succeeded as to obtain some respectable introductions abroad.

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[1] The Family Picture, I think, from memory, was published by Lockyer Davis, in 1781, and the Sceptic a year or more afterwards. The latter work has no plan, but in some parts it shews a more extensive power of imagination and strength of general induction, than he had before exhibited in any of his writings.—The colloquial language of the connecting parts of his Family Picture, is poor and inelegant; and has none of that easy, clear, and unaffected spirit which characterizes his Tales of the Castle, and still more his Hugh Trevor.

Lord Carmarthen was at first talked of as Ambassador; and Mr. Holcroft, by the interest of Mrs. Harcourt and Mrs. Greville, had an interview with his lordship; in which he was informed, that another person had been fixed upon to go to Paris. This was the Duke of Manchester; and he now applied to the Duchess of Devonshire, I believe through Mrs. Siddons, for a recommendation to the Duke to go out with him as under-secretary, or in any other situation, in which he might be of service as a literary man. He stated that a salary was not his object, and that his only motive was to gain some little knowledge of the manners of a court, and of foreign countries. The only advantage he reaped from this application was, that he obtained the honour of some commissions to execute for her Grace at Paris, and the notice of one or two persons of consequence while he was there.[1]

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[1] To dance attendance on the great seems, at this period of his life, to have been very much Mr. Holcroft's fate; but it certainly was an office for which he was by nature but indifferently fitted. In the present instance, his chief solicitude was to obtain an insight into the character and pursuits of the fashionable world. The ordeal he went thro' for this purpose, must frequently have been a severe one to his feelings. But as far as his present object was concerned, even the repulses he met with, or the distance at which he was kept, would still in some measure advance him towards the end he had in view. He seems to have profited by his experience, and has left several lively sketches of that part of the manners of the great, which relates to their intercourse with men of letters. I do not know that the following picture is true in all its particulars, but the general feelings it describes, were suggested to him by the reception he met with on his application to the Duchess of Devonshire.

'On another occasion, an actress, who, strange to tell, happened, very deservedly, to be popular; and whom, before she arrived at the dignity of a London theatre, I had known in the country, recommended me to a duchess. To this duchess I went day after day; and day after day was subjected for hours to the prying, unmannered insolence of her countless lacqueys. This time she was not yet stirring, though it was two o'clock in the afternoon; the next, she was engaged with an Italian vender of artificial flowers; the day after, the prince, and the devil does not know who beside, were with her; and so on, till patience and spleen were at daggers drawn. At last, from the hall I was introduced to the drawing-room, where I was half amazed to find myself. Could it be real? Should I, after all, see a creature so elevated; so unlike the poor compendium of flesh and blood with which I crawled about the earth? Why, it was to be hoped that I should! Still she did not come; and I stood fixed, gazing at the objects around me, longer perhaps than I can now well guess. The carpet was so rich, that I was afraid my shoes would disgrace it! The chairs were so superb, that I should insult them by sitting down! The sofas swelled in such luxurious state, that for an author to breathe upon them would be contamination! I made the daring experiment of pressing with a single finger upon the proud cushion, and the moment the pressure was removed, it rose again with elastic arrogance; an apt prototype of the dignity it was meant to sustain. Though alone, I blushed at my

Mr. Holcroft being still determined on a visit to the continent, procured an engagement with the editor of a newspaper, the Morning Herald, to send over paragraphs, relating to the events of the day, public amusements, fashions, etc. for which he was to have a guinea and a half a week; and a similar engagement with a printer, Mr. John Rivington, to furnish him with notices of new works, translations, etc. It was so arranged, that his salary from the newspaper office should be received by Mrs. Holcroft in his absence, for the immediate use of the family, and Rivington was to supply him with money for his expenses at Paris.

Mr. Holcroft's family consisted, at this time, of his wife and four children, only one of whom, Fanny, was by his present wife. Ann, the eldest, was by his first wife, and Sophy and William were by his second wife, whom he lost just before he left the country.

The two children, after her death, were for some time under the care of their uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Tipler, at Nottingham. When Mr. Holcroft became settled in Southampton Buildings, they were sent for up to town. The boy William was his greatest favourite: he was now (1783) between nine and ten years old; he was a very forward and intelligent child, could speak French with tolerable fluency, and his father, in order to perfect him in the language, determined to take him with him, and afterwards to leave him at a boarding-school in France.

Matters being thus arranged, Mr. Holcroft set out for Paris in the beginning of April, 1783, which place he reached a few days after. The first appearance of this capital does not seem to have answered

own littleness! Two or three times the familiars of the mansion skipped and glided by me; in at this door, and out at that; seeing, yet not noticing me. It was well they did not, or I should have sunk with the dread of being mistaken for a thief, that had gained a furtive entrance, to load himself with some parcel of the magnificence, that to poverty appeared so tempting! This time, however, I was not wholly disappointed: I had a sight of the duchess, or rather a glimpse. "Her carriage was waiting. She had been so infinitely delayed by my lord and my lady, and his highness, and Signora!—Was exceedingly sorry!—Would speak to me another time, to-morrow at three o'clock, but had not a moment to spare at present, and so vanished!" Shall I say she treated me proudly, and made me feel my insignificance? No; the little that she did say was affable; the tone was conciliating, the eye encouraging, and the countenance expressed the habitual desire of conferring kindness. But these were only aggravating circumstances, that shewed the desirableness of that intercourse which to me was unattainable. I say to me, for those who had a less delicate sense of propriety, who were more importunate, more intruding, and whose forehead was proof against repulse, were more successful. By such people she was besieged; on such she lavished her favours, till report said that she impoverished herself; for a tale of distress, whether feigned or real, if obtruded upon her, she knew not how to resist.'—Hugh Trevor, Vol. iii.

his expectations. He complained of the narrowness and dirtiness of the streets, of the meanness of the shops, and of the unfinished state of the principal public buildings. His chief attention, however, was directed to the discovery of new publications, of several of which he proposed translations to Rivington, most of which he afterwards executed for another bookseller. Among these were the Tales of the Castle, by Madam Genlis, Caroline of Litchfield, The Amours of Peter the Long, Memoirs of De Tott, Savary's Travels in Egypt, An Account of the Manners and Treatment of Animals, by D'Obsonville, etc. This last publication he recommends as a curious work in a letter to Mr. Greville; and observes, that from the account there given, it is evident that the Newmarket jockeys had learned the first principles of their art from the Arabs. His translation of the Tales of the Castle went through several editions, and introduced Mr. Holcroft to a correspondence, and afterwards to a personal acquaintance with the authoress. Most, if not all of these translations, were done for the Robinsons.

Mr. Holcroft made several friends at Paris, the chief of whom were Mercier, and a Mr. Bonneville, (the translator of the Theatre Allemand) of whom he had a high opinion; but Bonneville afterwards came to England, and they quarrelled. Of Mercier, the celebrated author of the Dramas, and *The Year* 2500, there will be occasion to speak hereafter. Either through these friends, or through the letters he brought with him, he was introduced to several persons of rank and literary pretension. Among them were the Duke and Duchess of Chartres, the Count de Catuelan, the Chevalier Macdonald, the Marquis de Dampiere, and others. He was desired by the Duke and Duchess of Chartres to read some scenes of Shakspeare to themselves and friends, with which he says they seemed more than satisfied. He appears afterwards to have entered into some discussion with the Count de Catuelan with respect to the comparative merits of Shakspeare and the French poets; for on the 24th of June, he addressed a short note to the Count, with a poem enclosed, on this subject. I shall here insert both, as well to shew the zeal with which Mr. Holcroft defended his great countryman while abroad, as for the sake of the manner in which it is done.

'Sir, The conversation we had on Sunday morning concerning Rousseau, Voltaire, Shakspeare, etc. started an idea as I was returning home, which I immediately put into the form you see. I would not have you suppose, Sir, I mean to depreciate the talents of Voltaire; that is far from my intention; I would only vindicate the poet who of all others within my sphere of knowledge, and as far as my judgment extends, is infinitely the greatest. I should have sent you the verses before, because I know your reverence for my favourite bard,[1] but that I kept them to see if after sleeping two or three nights I still thought them fit to be read. I am yet in doubt; for any thing middling on such a subject is contemptible. However, I have not yet shewn them to any person, except you, Sir, and Mr. Bonneville, at whose lodgings they were written.

'Clad in the wealthy robes his genius wrought,
In happy dreams was gentle Shakspeare laid;
His pleas'd soul wand'ring through the realms of thought,
While all his elves and fairies round him play'd.

'Voltaire approach'd—strait fled the quaint-eyed band,
For Envy's breath such sprites may not endure:
He pilfer'd many a gem with trembling hand;
Then stabb'd the bard to make the theft secure.

'Ungrateful man! Vain was thy black design:
Th' attempt and not the deed thy hand defiled.
Preserv'd by his own charms and spells divine,
Safely the gentle Shakspeare slept and smiled.'

The conception of this little allegorical fiction, is certainly a very happy one, and the execution is no less spirited and elegant. With respect however to the enthusiasm with which Englishmen generally endeavour to persuade foreigners of the superlative excellence of our great dramatist, unless where it is taken up in self-defence, it is undoubtedly a species of quixotism, and of the most hopeless kind.

The remittances which Mr. Holcroft was to receive from his employer, were not so regular as he had expected. Indeed there seems to have been some unaccountable neglect on the part of Rivington,[2] and Mr. Holcroft would have been reduced to very great distress, had it not been for the generous assistance afforded him by his friend Bonneville, who was himself in no very affluent circumstances. He was at last wearied out with the state of suspense and dependence in which he was kept, and in October he took the resolution of again returning to England. He however left his son behind him at a school, in or near Paris.

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[1] The Count was at the head of that party in France, who either did, or affected to admire Shakspeare.

[2] It was not Rivington the Bookseller, but John Rivington, the Printer, of St. John's Square, who died about the time of Mr. Holcroft's return, or (I believe) before it. He was one of the sons of Mr. Rivington, then bookseller of St. Paul's Church Yard, whose other sons still carry on the business of book-selling. Mr. John Rivington engaged in an agreement, or adventure with Mr. Holcroft, that works were to be selected, and translated by him, and published for their joint and equal account, he (Mr. Rivington,) advancing money to Mr. Holcroft, as a loan for his expenses.—The reason why he was not punctual in his remittances was, that he was much distressed for money to carry on his own extensive business of printing. John Rivington was a good-natured, worthy man, much esteemed by his friends. He died before the middle period of life, of a typhous fever, some time about the year 1785, or 1786.

Before Mr. Holcroft went from England, he had left an opera, called the Noble Peasant, in the hands of Mr. Colman, then manager of the Haymarket theatre. This had been accepted; and such was Mr. Colman's opinion of it, that on his return, he advanced Mr. Holcroft a hundred pounds, in the expectation of its future success. This piece was acted the ensuing season, (in 1784). The evening it was acted, Mr. Holcroft had placed himself behind the scenes, as authors generally do, to watch the progress of the piece, or be of occasional assistance. At the end however of the first act, the effect produced on the audience seemed so discouraging, and disapprobation began to manifest itself so strongly, that Mr. Holcroft could no longer stand it. He left the theatre, quite hopeless of success, and went and walked for an hour in St. James's Park. He had by this time so far mastered the agitation of his spirits, that he returned to the Haymarket, tolerably resigned to his fate. He got in just at the conclusion of the third act, and was most agreeably surprised, when he heard the house resounding with applause, and saw himself surrounded by the actors and others, who came to congratulate him on the complete success of the piece.—It however only ran eleven nights. It was then stopped by Mr. Colman, in consequence of a disagreement with the author, whom he had without reason suspected of writing some paragraphs in the Morning Herald against The Connoisseurs. Mr. Holcroft soon after vindicated himself so fully from this charge, that Mr. Colman was satisfied.[1]

The success of this opera was not certainly equal to its merits, which are considerable. It seems to have given rise to a succession of plays of the same kind, the scene of which is laid in the ages of chivalry, and which represent the costume, characters, and manners of remote times. Such particularly have been the Battle of Hexham, The Mountaineers, The Venetian Outlaw, etc. This opera is in fact a romance dramatised.—A young peasant joins some outlaws, who are no other than the famous archers, Adam Bell, Clym of the Clough, and Will Cloudesley; and soon after, has an opportunity together with them, to defeat a band of Danes, who were proceeding to attack the castle of Earl Walter, which lies in the neighbourhood of Sherwood. The cause of this quarrel is, that Anlaff the Dane had demanded Edwitha, the daughter of Earl Walter, in marriage, and had been refused. On this he determines to enforce his claim, and in the battle which ensues, Earl Walter's men under his son Harold are nearly vanquished, when they are unexpectedly joined by the outlaws and Leonard, the noble peasant, who slays Alric, the brother of the Danish chief. This youth who in addition to his warlike achievements, is represented with all the grace and amiableness of an Arcadian swain, is the first who by chance communicates the news of the victory to Edwitha, and her cousin Adela, who had wandered to a little distance from the castle. Edwitha is immediately smitten with the manly appearance, and modest demeanour of Leonard, the peasant, and is rallied a good deal on the subject, by her witty and merciless cousin, who puts the reader somewhat in mind of the character of Beatrice. Adam Bell, and his renowned compeers, in consequence of their service in the battle, conceive a plan for being reconciled to Earl Walter; and for this purpose, Adam Bell goes to the castle in the disguise of a Friar, to watch for some favourable opportunity of obtaining a pardon. Harold and his followers return, and one of these, Earl Egbert, a ridiculous, cowardly braggart, pretends to have slain Anlaff, whose sword and armour he has carried in a pompous manner before him by his Dwarf. This story is contradicted by the pretended friar, who says that he had shrieved a young peasant an hour before, who confessed that he had slain the Danish warrior. However, on the strength of the boasted service he had done, Earl Egbert lays claim to Earl Walter's daughter; and his pretensions are admitted by the father, in opposition to the most earnest remonstrances of the young lady. The valiant Earl accordingly remains at the castle, to court his froward mistress, while Harold, with his chosen friends, sets out to hunt for a few days on Cheviot Hills. The Danes hearing of his absence, and in revenge for the death of Alric, once more attack the castle, through which the greatest terror prevails, and particularly in the breast of Egbert; when Adam Bell takes the opportunity to discover himself to Earl Walter, and on obtaining promise of pardon, winds his bugle-horn, and is immediately joined by his friends who had watched without the castle, and among the rest by Leonard. A challenge is now sent from Anlaff, to the conqueror of his brother, to meet him in single combat, on the conditions, that if defeated, his followers are immediately to withdraw from the castle, but that if victorious, he is to bear off Edwitha as his prize. This message startles Earl Egbert, and he is going to disclaim his share in the death of Alric; when Leonard persuades him to accept the challenge, by offering to exchange armour privately with him, and meet the haughty Dane in his stead. They fight, and victory declares in favor of Leonard. Just before the battle, a letter conveyed by an arrow, had fallen at the feet of Edwitha, conjuring her to pray for the success of Leonard the peasant, which had occasioned some surprise. The riddle is now explained, and Leonard, the conqueror of Anlaff and Alric, and the preserver of her house, lays claim to the hand of Edwitha, as his reward. To this there are insuperable obstacles in the meanness of his origin; but this difficulty is soon removed by a discovery, that though disguised as a peasant, he is the son of a noble warrior. Harold returns, the marriage is celebrated, the outlaws are pardoned, and nothing but happiness reigns through the castle of Earl Walter.

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[1] I believe it is in The Connoisseurs, that a yawning scene was introduced by the author, who being also the manager, found great difficulty in getting it acted to his mind. He was met one morning by Macklin, coming out from a rehearsal, and looking rather discontented, the other asked what was the matter? 'I can't get these fellows to *yawn*,' was the answer. 'Oh if that's all, said Macklin, you have only to read them the first act of The Man of Business'; a dull play of that name, by Colman.

The story of this little piece is interesting, and natural, as far as a romantic story can be so. The dialogue is well supported throughout, particularly in the comic parts; and though there are frequent imitations of Shakespeare, both in the incidents, characters, and speeches, yet they are very happily executed, with much wit and fancy; which shew that the author had imbibed the spirit of the poet, in whose steps he treads. The songs, both the serious and humorous ones, have great merit; and were most of them set by Shield, to whom Mr. Holcroft, in his preface to the opera, pays a very high and deserved compliment. I should add here, for the sake of those who take an interest in dramatic retrospections, that Parsons played Earl Egbert, and that the part of the Fool was performed by Edwin.

Mr. Holcroft's next piece came out at Covent Garden, and was called The Choleric Fathers. This opera is inferior to the last. The scene is supposed to be in Spain, and the business of the play turns upon the testy disposition of two fathers, who suddenly break off a match between their children, just as they are going to sign the marriage-settlement. The merit of the piece consists chiefly in the easy impudence and vivacity of a valet, who forms a number of schemes, and acts different characters, to out-wit the old gentlemen, and bring about a reconciliation. The plot is formed after the manner of the Spanish school, full of intrigue and difficulties: these are at last overcome with a good deal of ingenuity; and the denouement is both natural and unexpected.

Mr. Holcroft had for some time been concerned in the Wit's Magazine, for which he wrote a number of amusing articles: but he now declined his share in it, seeming determined to bend his mind wholly to works of greater moment.

CHAPTER IV

In 1784, the marriage of Figaro, (*Mariage de Figaro*) by Beaumarchais, came out at Paris, where it was acted with astonishing success. Mr. Holcroft no sooner received notice of this piece, than he formed the instant resolution of going over to France to procure a copy of it, in order to translate and adapt it to the English stage.

He arrived in Paris the latter end of September, 1784, and proceeded to the lodgings of his friend Bonneville, to whom he immediately communicated the object of his journey. They both set about the accomplishment of it directly, but they found it attended with greater difficulty than they had expected. The comedy had not been printed: therefore their first plan was to procure a manuscript copy, either at the theatre, or through some friend of the author. This attempt however they found fruitless, from the jealousy with which the managers of the French theatre prevented any copies from getting abroad. The only resource now remaining was to commit it to memory. And for this purpose, both Holcroft and his friend went to the theatre every night for a week or ten days successively, till they brought away the whole with perfect exactness. At night when they got home, each of them set down as much as he could recollect of a scene, and they then compared notes; if any difficulty occurred, it was determined the following evening. Another scene was brought away from the next representation in like manner, and the entire play was at length transcribed. It was necessary to proceed in this deliberate and cautious manner, as if they had attempted to take notes, or had continued to do so more than once, their design would probably have been suspected, and defeated by the interference of the police.

Mr. Holcroft was not, it seems, quite confident of his success, till he had his manuscript safely deposited in his portmanteau, with which he immediately set out on his return home. No time was lost, and the acquisition Mr. Holcroft had made was the day after his arrival communicated to Mr. Harris, through the Robinsons. A meeting was appointed, and it was agreed that Figaro should, with all possible expedition, make his appearance in an English dress.

The necessary metamorphosis was completed in a few weeks, and Figaro was acted at Covent Garden Theatre, under the title of the Follies of a Day, a little before the Christmas holidays. The reception of the new piece was equal to the sanguine expectations Mr. Holcroft had formed, and the pains he had taken to bring it forward. It continued to be acted without intermission for a considerable length of time, and is still one of our most popular entertainments. It is needless here to give any account, or to speak of the merits of a piece so well known to the public, and for which we are indebted more to Mr. Holcroft's industry and enterprise, than to his genius as an author. It would be unjust, however, to suppose, that it is a mere literal translation. Many alterations were necessary to adapt it exactly to the taste of an English audience, and these were executed with much skill and felicity. Of all the pieces brought out by the author, this and the Road to Ruin have been the most successful. He received six hundred pounds for it at the theatre, besides a considerable sum for the copy-right, which was bought in at the time.

Mr. Holcroft himself played the part of Figaro the first night, in the absence of Mr. Bonner, for whom it was designed, and who afterwards took it. Mr. Holcroft had before this given up his engagement at Drury Lane, but at what precise period I cannot tell.

The music of the only song in this piece, 'Ah! well-a-day, my poor heart,' was by Shield. It became a great favourite; and Longman, coming to treat for the purchase of the music with Shield, who hesitated what price to ask, the other, half laughing, made him an offer of three and twenty dozen of wine for it; which terms were readily acceded to by Shield, it being more than he had at that time ever received for a song. Mr. Holcroft took the first opportunity of acquainting his friend Bonneville with the success of the undertaking in which he had been of such service to him. His letter is dated Dec. 28, 1784.

'Dear Bonneville, I am sure you will pardon my apparent neglect, when you remember how exceedingly hard I have been obliged to labour since my arrival in England. Figaro has made his appearance, and is likely to be as great a favourite in London as in Paris. I wish most sincerely you were here to be a witness of his good fortune. I enclose a letter of exchange for 480 livres, on Girard and Co. bankers, Paris. The many obligations I have to your friendship, the pleasure I take in your company, and the fears I entertain lest your very virtues should lead you into irretrievable difficulties, make me earnestly desire to see you in England. Fortune seems at present disposed to smile upon my efforts; I only wish you were with me to participate her favours. I am sure you would be happy. Why will you not come? Billy has written to you, as you will see; you know he loves you, he has reason to do so; and though a child, I hope he will not forget his obligation.[1] Pray do not fail to tell M. and Madame Mercier, that though I do not write, I remember them as they would wish to be remembered, that is, I remember their virtue and their friendship, and shall do while I live.'

Mr. Holcroft had about this time considerable intimacy with several French literary characters; among others, with M. Berquin, the author of "The Children's Friend," who came over here to inspect the translation of his own work into English; and a Mr. Floscel, an unfortunate but worthy man, whose works he recommended to the public in a circular proposal. Mr. Floscel came over to England to procure some subscriptions to a considerable literary undertaking, but was attacked by a disorder which proved fatal to him soon after his arrival.

It may be proper to add here, that Mr. Holcroft had offered the marriage of Figaro to Drury Lane theatre, before he left England; but he had clogged this proposal with other conditions, which probably prevented its acceptance. This appears from a letter either to Mr. Sheridan or Mr. Linley, which may be worth insertion; both as it contains the first hints of a project of dramatic authorship, which has, I believe, been since acted upon at the other house, and as it is characteristic of Mr. Holcroft's unwearied industry in his different undertakings, and of the sanguine temper with which he encouraged the most distant prospects of success. It is necessary to observe in explanation of one part of the letter, that he had while in Paris (in 1783), written a tragedy, the heroine of which he very anxiously wished to see personated by Mrs. Siddons, who was now in the height of her reputation.

'SIR, Not having been able to see you on the subject of the tragedy (Ellen, or the Fatal Cave) and being at present obliged to make a journey to Paris, I take the liberty of submitting the following proposals to your consideration. Besides the tragedy already presented, I have a comedy begun, which will be ready in a month after my return; that is, I will engage to give it in complete, some time in November.

'My proposals then, Sir, are, instead of author's nights, to receive a salary, and that a very moderate one; for which, exclusive of the tragedy and comedy already mentioned, I will engage to write any recitatives, songs, or choruses, which may be wanted for pantomimes, or other temporary occasions in the theatre. The terms I require are ten pounds per week, under the following provisos. If either the tragedy or comedy are condemned by the public, I will furnish an after piece; should two out of the three miscarry, my salary shall be reduced to seven pounds per week; and should all three be unfortunate, to five; and to be in the receipt of only five pounds per week till one has succeeded, the arrears to be then paid. By this proposal Mrs. Siddons's nights will not be encroached upon. I, as an author, shall have the interest of the house at heart, and shall neglect no opportunity of promoting that interest:—the terms are so moderate, the probabilities I presume are greatly that the proprietors should gain, not lose. My own reputation will make me exert myself to the utmost; and with respect to my fulfilling the conditions proposed, I will enter into any forfeiture, not exceeding the receipt of my whole salary, to fulfil them literally. Indeed, whatever my talents may be, my industry and facility will not be disputed. I set off for France to-morrow morning, where, Sir, there is at present a most popular piece, 'The Marriage of Figaro,' which I shall endeavour to procure; it will be to the advantage of the theatre to get first what I know is thought an object, and which, if these terms are agreeable to you, Sir, and the proprietors, I shall then be more earnest and expeditious, concerning. I must, however, add, I am by no means certain of obtaining it; on the contrary, I understand it will be attended with great difficulties. I must intreat, Sir, that this proposal remain totally a secret, if not acceded to; otherwise it might injure me: and the fear lest it might by accident become known, was the only motive that prevented me from making it sooner. Should this meet your approbation, you will greatly oblige me to signify as much as soon as possible, by sending a line directed to me at Paris.'

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[1] Mr. Holcroft, as it appears from this letter, had brought his son William with him from France.

CHAPTER V

The Comedy of Seduction appeared in the year 1787, and was received with very great applause. Some few hints for this play were taken from *Les Liaisons Dangereux*; but it was chiefly original, and possessed great merit. In 1789, appeared the translation of the King of Prussia's works, in twelve or thirteen volumes, and also the translation of the Essays of Lavater. For the former of these, Mr.

Holcroft received 1200l. from Robinsons, the booksellers. He had worked almost night and day to get it out soon, and to prevent the possibility of anticipation. He had, I believe, very early, and before the publication of the original work, procured a copy through the interest of the Prussian Ambassador. He complains, in one of his letters about this time, of the difficulty he had in translating the poetry of the great Frederic, for whom our author, though he translated his works, seems to have had no great predilection.[1] His translation of Lavater's smaller work has certainly been the means of making the English public acquainted with the system of that ingenious and lively writer; but it was criticised with unusual severity by the authors of the Analytical Review, and this led to some disagreeable altercation between Mr. Holcroft and the Reviewers.

In 1790, the German Hotel appeared at Covent Garden, a play which is little more than a translation from the German of Brandes. The plot is very neat and lively, and sometimes interesting: but there is very little besides plot and incident in the piece. Baron Thorck seems the counterpart of Squire Thornhill, in the Vicar of Wakefield. The most striking circumstance in this drama is the perfect preservation of the unities of time and place. In the present instance, this peculiarity adds to the natural effect of the scene by riveting the imagination to one spot, and thus giving a sort of reality to it, and by making the incidents follow one another in such quick succession, that the mind has no time to question their probability. The events are some of them the most improbable that can be supposed; yet such is the mechanical construction of the plot, that they seem inseparably interwoven with each other, and as if they could not happen otherwise. The whole play is like a scene really passing in a hall of a large Hotel, in the course of a few hours.

Mr. Holcroft brought out the Comedy of The School for Arrogance, in the beginning of 1791. In consequence of some disagreement between Mr. Holcroft and Mr. Harris respecting former pieces, it was imagined it would not be very graciously received if the author were known; and a friend undertook for a time *to father* the piece. After the comedy had been twice performed, the author wrote the following letter to the manager of the theatre. It is published in the preface.

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[1] Mr. Holcroft long projected a work, of which Frederick II. was to have been the hero, and the subject the effects of war and despotism. He made considerable preparations for this work; for he had completely lined a large closet with books, which were to furnish the materials, direct or collateral, for writing his history of *bad* governments.

'Sir, I have patiently waited the proper moment in which to write to you. That moment I hope is now come. I should be guilty of injustice, were I any longer to delay expressing my sense of the propriety with which you have acted relative to the School for Arrogance, after you had every reason to suppose it mine. Such conduct, Sir, is highly honourable; and is not only productive of the best effects, but must secure the best and most permanent applause. That you had conceived disadvantageous ideas of me, I knew; though I have no doubt, but I shall ultimately convince you, that, even supposing me to be mistaken, my motives have been laudable. With me you were irritated; but you had the justice to forget the man, and promote the interests of the piece. This I hold it my duty to say to the world at large. I am, Sir, etc.'

The School for Arrogance is, in its plan, founded on *Le Glorieux* of Destouches, but it is for the most part original. It is Mr. Holcroft's best play, with the exception of the Road to Ruin, and, perhaps, even this exception is doubtful. The last of these pieces is, no doubt, much more adapted for stage-effect; but I question whether the former would not be perused oftener, and with greater delight, in the closet. It is less eventful, less interesting, less showy and dazzling; but it has beauties more refined in the conception, and difficult in the execution. Such is the whole of the character of Count Conolly Villars, which is managed throughout with the nicest art. His pride of birth; the conflict between the feelings of love, and a sense of the honour of his family; and the rapid and delicate alternations of passion, arising from a constant fear of degrading himself, either by resisting or indulging the familiarity of others, are described without the violation of truth, perhaps, in a single instance. On the other hand, the contrast between the pride of wealth and that of ancestry, which the character of Lady Peckham gives the author an opportunity to display, has an effect equally forcible, whether we regard the immediate impression on the audience, or the moral lesson it conveys. The other characters are comparatively insignificant, though necessary and well supported. To expose the weaknesses of pride, as it is founded on the prejudice either of wealth or ancestry, may be said to form the whole business of the piece. This, however, is not done by pompous, laboured declamation, or satirical epigrams; but by shewing the effects of these prejudices on real characters and in natural situations. As this play is less known than some of Mr. Holcroft's other plays, we shall select the following scene for the entertainment of the reader.

'*Enter* COUNT, *bowing*.

Lady Peckham. So, Sir! They tells me, Sir, that you and my foolish husband are colloguing together, for to marry my daughter! Is this troo, Sir?

Count. (*with his usual polite haughtiness*) If it were, Ma'am?

Lady P. Do you know who Miss Loocy Peckham is, Sir?

Count. Not very well, Ma'am.

Lady P. Sir?

Count. Except that she is your daughter.

Lady P. And do you know who I am, Sir?

Count. I have been told, Ma'am.

Lady P. Told, Sir! Told! Vhat have you been told? Vhat have you been told, Sir?

Count. That your ladyship was an honest wax-chandler's daughter.

Lady P. Yes, Sir! The debbidy of his vard, Sir! A common councilman, and city sword-bearer! Had an Aldermand's gownd von year, vus chosen sheriff the next, and died a lord-mayor elect!

Count. With all his honours blooming on his brow!

Lady P. And do you know, Sir, that I designs, Sir Samooel Sheepy, Sir, an English knight and barrow knight, for the spouse of my daughter! A gentleman, that is a gentleman! A person of honour and purtensions, and not a Papish Jesubite!

Count. Of his honours and pretensions I have yet to be informed, Madam.

Lady P. Vhat, Sir! do you mean for to say, Sir, or to insinivate, Sir, that Sir Samooel Sheepy is not your betters?

Count. If Sir Samuel himself, Madam, had put such a question to me, I would have replied with my sword, or more properly, with my cane.

Lady P. Wery vell, Sir! I'll let Sir Samooel know that you threatens to cane him; I'll take care to report you! Cane quotha! He shall talk to you.

Count. Let him, Madam.

Lady P. Madam! Madam! At every vord—Pray, Sir, do you know that Sir Paul Peckham has had the honour to be knighted by the king's own hand?

Count. I have heard as much, Madam.

Lady P. Madam, indeed!—And for you for to think for to look up to my daughter!

Count. Up, Madam!

Lady P. Yes, Sir—up, Sir!—Pray, Sir, vhat are your purtensions?

Count. (*with great agitation*) Madam!

Lady P. Who are you, Sir? Vhere do you come from? Who knows you? Vhat parish do you belong to?

Count. Madam, I am of a family known to history, known to Europe, known to the whole universe!

Lady P. Ah! I believes you are better known than trusted.

Count. The names of Conolly and Villars, Madam, never before were so degraded as they have been in my person.

Lady P. Oh! I makes no doubt but you are a person that vould degurade any name!

Count. Insult like what I have received from you, Madam, no *man* should utter and escape death—But you are—

Lady P. Vhat, Sir? Vhat am I, Sir?

Count. A woman.

Lady P. A voman, indeed! Sir, I vould have you to know as how I am a lady! A lady, Sir, of his Majesty's own making! And moreover, Sir, don't you go for to flatter yourself that I shall bestow the hand and fortin of Miss Loocy Peckham upon any needy outlandish Count somebody nobody! My daughter, Sir, is for your betters!

Count. Madam, though scurril—[*Recollecting himself*] I say, Madam, though such vul—, such accusations are beneath all answer, yet I must tell you that by marrying your daughter, if after this I should sink myself so low—I say, by marrying your daughter, Madam, I should confer an honour on your family, as much superior to its expectations, as the splendour of the glorious sun is to the twinkling of the worthless glow-worm!

Lady P. Vhat! Vhat! [*Enter Edmund, son of Lady Peckham.*] Marry come up! An Irish French foriner! Not so good as von of our parish *porpers*! And you! You purtend to compare yourself to the united houses of the Peckhams and the Pringles! Your family indeed! Yourn! Vhere's your settlement? Yourn! Vus'nt my great uncle, Mr. Peter Pringle, the cheese-monger of Cateaton-street, a major in the Train Bands before you vus born, or thought of?

Edmund [*Aside.*] So, so! I'm too late! [*Aloud*] Let me intreat your ladyship—

Lady P. Vhat! Hasn't I an ownd sister at this day married to Mr. Poladore Spraggs, the tip-toppest hot-presser in all Crutched Friars! Isn't my maiden aunt, Miss Angelica Pringle, vorth thirty thousand pounds, in the South Sea funds, every morning she rises! And doesn't I myself get up and go to bed, the greatest lady in this here city! And for to purtend for to talk to me of his family! His'n.

Edmund. The Count, Madam, is a man of the first distinction in his native country!

Lady P. Vhat country is that, Sir? Who ever heard of any country but England? A Count among beggars! How much is his Countship worth?

Count. I had determined to be silent, Madam, but I find it impossible! [*With vehement volubility*] And I must inform you, my family is as ancient, as exalted, and as renowned, as you have proved yours to be—what I shall not repeat! That I am the heir to more rich acres than I believe your Ladyship ever rode over! That my father's vassals are more numerous than your Ladyship's vaunted guineas! That the magnificence in which he has lived, looked with contempt on the petty, paltry strainings of a trader's pride! And that in his hall are daily fed—[*Stops short, and betrays a consciousness of inadvertent falsehood, but suddenly continues with increasing vehemence*] Yes, Madam, are daily fed; now, at this moment, Madam, more faithful adherents, with their menials and followers, than all your boasted wealth could for a single year supply!

Edmund. Are? At this moment, say you, Count?

Count. Sir, I—I have said.

Edmund. I know you to be a man of honour, and that you cannot say what is not.

Count. I—I—I have said, Sir! [*Walking with great perturbation.*]

Lady P. You have said more in a minute than you can prove in a year!

Edmund. I will pledge my word for the Count's veracity.

Count. [*Aside*] What have I done! [*With agony*] A lie!

Lady P. As for you, Sir, I doesn't believe von vord you say! I knows the tricks of such sham chevaliers as you, too vell!

Count. [*Walking away from her*] Torture!

Lady P. But I'll take care to have you prognosticated.

Count. [*Aside*] I can support it no longer. [*Going.*]

Edmund. [*Catching him by the hand*] My dear Count——

Count. Sir, I am a dishonoured villain! [*Exit.*

Lady P. There! There! he tells you himself he is a willin? his conscience flies in his face, and he owns it!

Edmund. [*With great ardour and feeling*] Madam, he is a noble-hearted gentleman! His agonizing mind deems it villainy to suffer insults so gross. [*Exit.*

Re-enter the COUNT, *deep in thought, and much agitated.*

Lady P. [*Seeing him*] Marry my daughter, indeed!—Faugh! [*Exit Lady Peckham.*

Count. Into what has my impetuous anger hurried me?—Guilty of falsehood! I? To recede is impossible! What! Stand detected before this city Madam!—whose tongue, itching with the very scrophula of pride, would iterate liar in my ear! No! Falsehood itself is not so foul.'—ACT III.

This is truth and nature. If it should be thought that the description of Lady Peckham borders too much on caricature, it should be remembered that grossness is the essence of the character, and it serves to set off more forcibly the refinement of the Count. If, however, it should be insisted that the scene which has been transcribed is a union of farce and sentimental comedy, still it is farce worthy of Foote, and the serious part is worthy of any one.

The sentiments which are inculcated in the scene which precedes the one just quoted, are such as have never been embodied with the prejudices of any class of men, because it must be confessed they are much more adapted to convince the reason than to flatter the passions or the imagination! Lucy Peckham is a female philosopher, and lectures the Count on his pretensions, in a manner scarcely less grating to his feelings, than the personalities of her mother. The Count says, 'Mankind have agreed, Madam, to honour the descendants of the wise and the brave.' To this his mistress replies, 'They have so,—But you have, doubtless, too much native merit to arrogate to yourself the worth of others! You are no jay, decked in the peacock's feathers! You are not idiot enough to imagine that a skin of parchment, on which are emblazoned the arms and the acts of one wise man, with a long list of succeeding fools, is any honour to you! Responsible to mankind for the use and the abuse of such talents as you feel yourself endowed with, you ought to think only how you may deserve greatly; and disdain to be that secondary thing, that insignificant cypher, which is worthless, except from situation!'

Whatever may be thought of the political tendency of this speech, the morality of it is unquestionable; and though it may not be practicable for society at large to act upon the standard here proposed, yet surely every individual would do well to apply it to his own conduct, and to the value which he sets upon himself in his own private esteem. However necessary it may be that the vulgar should respect rank for its own sake, it is desirable that the great themselves should respect virtue more, and endeavour to make the theory, on which nobility is founded, correspond with the practice—private worth with public esteem. The sentiments of this kind, which Mr. Holcroft has interspersed through his different works, may therefore remain as useful moral lessons: their noxious political qualities, if ever they had such, have long since evaporated; though I shall take an opportunity to shew that Mr. Holcroft's politics were never any thing more than an enlarged system of morality, growing out of just sentiments, and general improvement.

The School for Arrogance is the first of the author's pieces, in which there appeared a marked tendency to political or philosophical speculation. Sentiments of this kind, however, and at that time, would rather have increased than diminished the popularity of any piece. A proof of this is, that the very epilogue (which is seldom designed to give offence), glances that way.

'Such is the modern man of high-flown fashion!
Such are the scions sprung from Runny-Mead!
The richest soil, that bears the rankest weed!
Potatoe-like, the sprouts are worthless found;
And all that 's good of them *is under ground*.'

The wit and point of this satire, will not be disputed.

Mr. Holcroft's next play was The Road to Ruin, which carried his fame as a dramatic writer into every corner of the kingdom, where there was a play-house. Nothing could exceed the effect produced by this play at its first appearance, nor its subsequent popularity. It not only became a universal favourite, but it deserved to be so. Mr. Holcroft, in sending round one or two copies of it to his friends before it was acted, had spoken of it as his best performance. He had hitherto been generally dissatisfied with what he had written, as not answering his own wishes, or what he thought himself capable of producing: but in this instance he seems to have thought his muse had been as favourable to him as she was likely to be. Authors are perhaps seldom deceived with respect to their works, when they judge of them from their own immediate feelings, and not out of contradiction to the opinions of others, or from a desire to excel in something which the world thinks them incapable of. Mr. Holcroft's predictions were at least verified by the appearance of the Road to Ruin. It had a run greater than almost any other piece was ever known to have, and there is scarcely a theatre in the kingdom, except Drury-Lane, and the Haymarket, in which it has not been acted numberless times. The profits he received from it were nine hundred pounds from Mr. Harris, and three or four hundred for the copy-right.

The Road to Ruin is so well known to the public, and its merits have been so fully established, that it seems almost impertinent to make any remarks upon it: yet as it is Mr. Holcroft's greatest dramatic effort, it might be thought wrong to pass it over, without attempting to point out its leading features, or ascertain its rank among similar productions.

The character of Goldfinch, though not the principal character, was undoubtedly that which contributed most to the popularity of the piece. Nine persons out of ten who went to see the Road to Ruin, went for the sake of seeing Goldfinch; though the best parts of the play are those in which he has no concern. The very great effect it produced was, in some measure, owing to the inimitable acting of Lewis. But there are other circumstances which would almost be sure to make it the favourite of the public. In the first place, it is a most masterly delineation of the character it pretends to describe; namely, that of a person of very little understanding, but with very great animal spirits, in the heigh-day of youth and thoughtlessness, and who is hurried away by all the vulgar dissipation of fashionable life. There is not the smallest glimmering of wit or sense in all that Goldfinch says; yet nothing can exceed the life, the spirit, the extreme volubility, the restless animation, which Mr. Holcroft has thrown into this character. He has none but the most mean and groveling ideas; his language consists entirely of a few cant words; yet the rapidity with which he glances from object to object, and the evident delight which he takes in introducing his favourite phrases on all occasions, have all the effect of the most brilliant wit. *That's your sort* comes in at least fifty times, and is just as unexpected and lively the last time as the first, for no other reason than because Goldfinch has just the same pleasure in repeating it. This mechanical humour was so much the more striking in its effect, because every person could make it his own. It was a very transferable, and therefore a very convenient, commodity. It was a compendious receipt for being witty, to go and see Goldfinch, and repeat after him, *That's your sort.* If the invention was not favourable to the increase, it was at least calculated for the spread of wit. Mr. Holcroft may in some sort be considered as the author of this species of dramatic humour, of which succeeding writers have fully availed themselves, and on which the effect of many of our most popular modern pieces depends. Cant terms have, it is true, always been the subject of ridicule on the stage; but Mr. Holcroft was, I believe, the first who made them interesting; or who conceived the project of giving spirit and animation to a character by the force of a single phrase. The two most important characters in the piece, are those of old Dornton and his son; the former, an eminent banker in the city, the latter, a wild, but high-minded and noble-spirited young man, something like Charles, in The School for Scandal. The serious interest of the piece arises chiefly from the struggle between prudence and affection in the mind of the father, and from the compunction and generous sacrifices of the youth to save his father's house from the ruin which he believes he has brought upon it. He is in love with Sophia, the daughter of the widow Warren. This last lady is described with a person and mind equally unprepossessing. She is, however, supposed to be rich, and is violently in love with young Dornton, who determines, rather than see his father ruined, to marry her, and forsake his young and guileless Sophia. This match is prevented by the timely interference of old Dornton.

Mr. Sulky and Mr. Silky are two very principal characters in the play, whose names are happily adapted to their characters; the one being as remarkable for a blunt kind of surly honesty, as the other is for smooth, sleek, fawning knavery. It is, however, on the confusion of these two names, that the contrivance of the plot depends. For the late Mr. Warren, not being well pleased with the conduct of his wife, and suspecting her violent professions of a determination not to marry again, had made a will, in which, in case such an event should happen, he had left his property to his natural son, Milford, and to his wife's daughter, appointing Mr. Sulky his executor. He died abroad; and the person who brought over the will, being deceived by the name, leaves it in the possession of Mr. Silky, instead of Mr. Sulky. Mr. Silky, knowing the widow's amorous propensities, and willing to profit by them, informs Goldfinch, who is besieging her for her money, that he has a deed in his possession which puts the widow's fortune, should she marry again, entirely in his power; and exacts a promise from him of fifty thousand pounds out of a hundred and fifty, as the price of secrecy, with respect to himself. He then calls on the widow, shews her the conditions of the will, and threatens to make it public unless she marries Goldfinch, and assents to his proposal. She, however, governed by her passion for young Dornton, and relying on the exhaustless wealth of his family, sets Mr. Silky and his secret at defiance; and on his next visit, treats Mr. Goldfinch with very little ceremony. But after she finds herself disappointed of Dornton, and is in the height of her exclamations against the whole sex, Goldfinch is announced. His name at this moment has the effect of suddenly calming her spirits; he is admitted; received with much affected modesty: he makes another offer; the bargain is struck; Mr. Silky is sent for, and Goldfinch sets off post haste for a license. But just as he is going out, he meets Milford; and being more fool than knave, he tells the latter of his marriage, and of the hush-money to Silky, on account of some deed, by which he has the widow's fortune at his command, though he does not know how. This excites suspicion in the mind of Milford, who, supposing it must be his father's will, goes immediately to Sulky to inform him of the circumstance, and they conceal themselves in the widow's apartment. Goldfinch, Silky, and the widow, soon after come in; every thing is settled; and the will is on the point of being committed to the flames, when Milford and Sulky burst upon them, and their whole scheme is unluckily defeated.

This sketch may be sufficient to give an idea of the bustle of the scene, and the rapidity with which events follow one another. The story never stagnates for a moment; the whole is full, crowded, and the wonder seems to be how so many incidents, so regularly connected, and so clearly explained, can be brought together in so small a compass. At the same time, the hurry of events, and the intricacy of the plot, do not interfere with the unfolding of the characters, or the forcible expression of the passions. Some of the scenes are replete with the truest pathos, which is expressed without exaggeration, or the least appearance of art. Though the feelings of paternal affection, of terror, generosity, etc. are often wrought up to the highest pitch, and described with their full force, so that the reader finds nothing wanting; yet it is in language so easy and natural, that not only might it be uttered by the persons themselves, but they could scarcely use any other.

Mrs. Holcroft died in the year 1790.

It was in the preceding year that Mr. Holcroft met with the severest blow that fortune had yet inflicted on him, the death of his son. This unhappy event has been sometimes misrepresented by persons unacquainted with the character and feelings of Mr. Holcroft: the best answer to these misrepresentations will be to state the circumstances as they happened, without any other comment.

William Holcroft was his only son, and favourite child, and this very circumstance perhaps led to the catastrophe, which had nearly proved fatal to his father as well as to himself. He had been brought up, if any thing, with too much care and tenderness. The greatest attention had been paid to his education from the very first, not only by teaching him to read and write, French, English, etc., but by daily instilling such moral principles into his mind, as it was Mr. Holcroft's earnest wish, and firm belief, would in the end make him a great and good man. Perhaps it was a mistake to suppose that precept could anticipate the fruits of experience, or that it was not a dangerous experiment to enable a child to think and reason for himself on the propriety of his own actions, before settled habits and a knowledge of consequences had provided a sufficient counterpoise to the levity of youth, and the caprices of fancy. Be this as it may, he was a boy of extraordinary capacity, and Mr. Holcroft thought no pains should be spared for his instruction and improvement. From the first, however, he had shewn an unsettled disposition, and his propensity to ramble was such from his childhood, that when he was only four years old, and under the care of an aunt at Nottingham, he wandered away to a place at some distance, where there was a coffee-house, into which he went, and read the newspapers to the company, by whom he was taken care of, and sent home. This propensity was so strong in him, that it became habitual, and he had run away six or seven times before the last. Once, for instance, in 1786, when he was about thirteen, he had taken a little mare which belonged to his father, and went to Northampton, where he was discovered by some respectable persons in the place, and word being sent to Mr. Holcroft, he went down, and brought him home with him. On Sunday, November 8th, 1789, he brought his father a short poem; a watch which had been promised as a reward, was given him; his father conversed with him in the most affectionate manner, praised, encouraged, and told him, that notwithstanding his former errors and wanderings, he was convinced he would become a good and excellent man. But he observed, when taking him by the hand to express his kindness, that the hand of the youth, instead of returning the pressure as usual, remained cold and insensible. This however at the moment was supposed to be accidental. He seemed unembarrassed, cheerful, and asked leave, without any appearance of design or hesitation, to dine with a friend in the city, which was immediately granted. He thanked his father, went down stairs, and several times anxiously inquired whether his father were gone to dress. As soon as he was told that he had left his room, he went up stairs again, broke open a drawer, and took out forty pounds. With this, the watch, a pocket-book, and a pair of pistols of his father's, he hastened away to join one of his acquaintance, who was going to the West-Indies. The name of this young person was G——. He was immediately pursued to Gravesend, but ineffectually. It was not discovered till the following Wednesday, that he had taken the money. After several days of the most distressing inquietude, there appeared strong presumptive proofs that he, with his acquaintance, was on board the Fame, Captain Carr, then lying in the Downs. The father and a friend immediately set off, and travelled post all Sunday night to Deal. Their information proved true, for he was found to be on board the Fame, where he assumed a false name, though his true situation was known to the Captain. He had spent all the money, except 15*l.*, in paying for his passage, and purchasing what he thought he wanted. He had declared he would shoot any person who came to take him, but that if his father came, he would shoot himself. His youth, for he was but sixteen, made the threat appear incredible. The pistols, pocket-book, and remaining money, were locked up in safety for him, by his acquaintance. But he had another pair of pistols concealed. Mr. Holcroft and his friend went on board, made inquiries, and understood he was there. He had retired into a dark part of the steerage. When he was called and did not answer, a light was sent for, and as he heard the ship's steward, some of the sailors, and his father, approaching, conscious of what he had done, and unable to bear the presence of his father, and the open shame of detection, he suddenly put an end to his existence.

The shock which Mr. Holcroft received was almost mortal. For three days he could not see his own family, and nothing but the love he bore that family could probably have prevented him from sinking under his affliction. He seldom went out of his house for a whole year afterwards: and the impression was never completely effaced from his mind.

BOOK IV

CHAPTER I

Mr. Holcroft had been, for some years, imbibing principles, and forming a system in his mind, relative to political and moral questions, considerably different from those which are generally received, or at least acted upon by the world.

The interest which he felt in the success of these speculations, will be best expressed by extracting some part of a letter to a friend, written in February, 1790. He says, 'The great object I have in view, is not the obtaining of riches, but the power of employing my time according to the bent of my genius, in the performance of some works which shall remain when I am no more—works that will promote the general good. This is a purpose I have so strongly at heart, that I would with pleasure sacrifice ease, peace, health, and life for its accomplishment: nay, accomplish it I will, unless cut off in the midst of my labours. It has been my pursuit for years, and you are my witness, I have never relaxed, never been discouraged by disappointment, to which indeed I hold men of real strength of mind to be superior.' A clearer picture cannot be given of the motives from which the writer appears to have engaged in and prosecuted his task—the regard of good men hereafter, and a wish to promote the general welfare of mankind, by diffusing a system of more just and enlightened principles of action.

These rational and worthy motives are those which actuated Mr. Holcroft's whole conduct in the part he took in such questions: they are the only ones which he had at heart, and he never seems in a single instance to have wavered in his pursuit, by flattering the prejudices, or soothing the vices of any set of men, by cajoling or inflaming the multitude, or by adapting his views or language to those of the ignorant, the rash, or profligate. He was a man of too honest, and of too independent a turn of mind to be a time-server, to lend himself as a tool to the violence of any party; his habits and studies rendered him equally averse to political intrigues or popular tumults; and he had no other desire than to speak the truth, such as he saw it, with a conviction that its effects must be beneficial to society. Whether his opinions were right or wrong, is another question: I speak here of his intentions. But I am anticipating the subject; and also deviating from my plan, which was not to write a panegyric, but a history.

Anna St. Ives, a novel in 7 vols. appeared in 1792. It was much read at the time, and excited considerable attention, both from the force with which it is written, and from the singularity of the characters and sentiments. As a mere novel, it is interesting, lively, and vigorous. The natural or real characters it contains, are exhibited with great truth of conception, with strong and vivid colouring, and often with a great deal of whimsical eccentricity. The characters both of the proud, daring, impetuous, revengeful, capricious Coke Clifton, and of the sly, selfish, insinuating, cool, plodding, immovable Abimelech Henley, are master-pieces. The invention of either of these characters would stamp the author a man of genius. With respect to the first, however spirited the execution, the invention is beyond all doubt due to Richardson: Coke Clifton and Lovelace are the same being, and in fact are often placed in situations so similar, that the resemblance must strike the most cursory reader. Notwithstanding this, too much praise can hardly be given to Mr. Holcroft for the life, the enthusiasm, and glowing fancy with which he has sustained this character, and applied it to a different purpose. As to Abimelech, he is all his own; and he is a person of such quaint and ill-sorted qualities, his humility and his insolence are so oddly jumbled together, his knavery is so artfully disguised, and yet so easily seen through, and he delivers all his purposes in such a strange jargon of cant terms and phrases, every one of which has some end, though their connexion is scarcely intelligible; in short there is such a perfect consistence given to the most crude and shapeless mass, and this in a manner so unlike any thing else, that it seems almost equal to the invention of a new language. That class of men who get introduced into gentlemen's families; and who, by plodding, hoarding, fawning, and flattering the follies of their masters, make fortunes themselves, ruin, and then trample upon their employers, were never better represented than in the person of Mr. Abimelech Henley. The steward in Castle Rackrent is not so very a knave by half.—The character of the Count de Beaunoir, though short, is managed with a great deal of humour and feeling. Mac Fane, the keeper of the madhouse, etc. are strong and real portraits.

But the principal characters in the novel, (at least those which were intended by the author to be the most prominent,) are not natural, but ideal beings. In fact, they are not so properly characters (that is, distinct individuals) as the vehicles of certain general sentiments, or machines put into action, as an experiment to shew how these general principles would operate in particular situations. Frank Henley, and Anna St. Ives, are the philosophical hero and heroine of the work. They are the organs through which the voice of truth and reason is to breathe, and whose every action is to be inspired by the pure love of justice.—Mr. Holcroft, by embodying his general principles in individual characters, no doubt, gained some advantages, which he could not otherwise have done; such as shewing the possibility of his plan, by actually reducing it to practice, and also pointing out how persons convinced of the truths he wishes to impress, both may and ought to act in the present state of society. For instance, duelling is held to be criminal; and to shew that declining a duel is no proof of cowardice, Frank Henley, who receives a blow from Coke Clifton, will not fight with him, but the very next day leaps into the water after him, and saves his life at the imminent hazard of his own: thus by an act of true heroism rising superior to the prejudices of false honour.

But though the author has gained in point of argument by throwing his reasonings into a narrative form, perhaps he has lost in point of the general impression produced upon the mind. It was Mr. Holcroft's business to make his characters not only consistent, but interesting and amiable: and he has done nearly all that was possible to accomplish this end. But it seems as if the difficulty of the undertaking, from the very nature of it, was too great to be overcome. For in spite of all the appeals that are made to reason, and though we strive ever so much to suspend our invidious prepossessions, yet the old adage of 'A faultless monster, which the world ne'er saw,' continually obtrudes itself upon us, and poisons our satisfaction. It is true, our dislike may be irrational, but still it is dislike. That which, if left in generals, we might believe and admire, if brought to a nearer view, and exhibited in all its circumstances of improbability, we begin to distrust, and for that reason to hate: *quod sic mihi ostendis, incredulus odi.* Perfect virtue, the pure disinterested love of justice, an unshaken zeal for truth, regardless of all petty consequences, a superiority to false modesty, a contempt for the opinion of the world, when reason and conscience are on our side, all these are fine things, and easily conceived, while they remain, what they are, the pure creatures of the understanding, mere abstract essences, which cannot kindle too warm a glow of enthusiasm in the breast. But when these airy nothings are made reluctantly to assume a local habitation and a name, called Frank, or Anna; when they are personified in the son of a knavish steward, or the daughter of a foolish baronet; when they are petticoated, booted and spurred; when they are mounted on horse-back, or seat themselves in a post-chaise, or walk arm in arm through the streets of London, or Paris,—the naked form of truth vanishes under all this pitiful drapery, and the mind is distracted with mean and contradictory appearances which it knows not how to reconcile. When familiarised to us by being brought on the real stage of life, and ascribed to any supposed characters, perfect virtue becomes little better than a cheat, and the pretension to superior wisdom, looks like affectation, conceit, and pedantry. This effect must in some measure take place, even though the most perfect consistency and propriety were preserved: how much more then when the mind eagerly catches hold of every little flaw, to prove that the whole is a piece of acting, and to revert to its habitual feelings of nature and probability?—It is not difficult to personify the passions, so as to render them natural: that is a language which men readily understand. But of the difficulty of exhibiting the passions entirely under the control of reason, of virtue, religion, or any other abstract principle, let those judge who have studied the romances of Richardson. To have made Clarissa a natural character with all her studied attention to prudence, propriety, etc. is the greatest proof of his genius: yet even she is not free from affectation. In Sir Charles Grandison, he has completely failed: he has exhibited him either as an automaton, a puppet, or a self-complacent coxcomb, 'ugly all over with affectation,' whose own perfection, propriety of conduct, and fine qualities, are never for a moment out of his sight. Rousseau's Julia, again, is something of a pedant, and cold, calculating, and insincere. I mention these instances to shew, that though I do not think Mr. Holcroft has rendered his hero and heroine so attractive as he himself probably thought they might be made, yet it was not for want of genius, but from the impossibility of the undertaking. Frank Henley, though a much nobler-minded being than Sir Charles Grandison, yet stands in general in the same predicament. We admire his actions, but we do not love the man: his motives we respect, but with his feelings we have little sympathy. Indeed he is a character who does not stand in need of our sympathy; 'A reasoning, self-sufficient thing, an intellectual all in all.' He is himself a being without passions; and in order to feel with him, we must ourselves be divested of passion.

I have made these remarks to shew the difficulty of embodying a philosophic character in a dramatic form.

The dignity of truth is in some measure necessarily lowered by coming to us 'in so questionable a shape,' and nothing but a very powerful mind can prevent it from becoming quite ridiculous and contemptible. Mr. Holcroft himself was perfectly aware of the prejudices he had to encounter, in order to exhibit his characters, so as not to be misunderstood. He has not indeed been sparing of the most pointed raillery upon the philosophic pretensions of Frank Henley, in the letters of his rival, Coke Clifton. And the best proof of the strength with which he has conceived, and pourtrayed his favourite character is, that notwithstanding all the other's wit and eloquence, Frank is never once degraded in our esteem. He stands his ground firmly, and, upon the whole, has the preference, though it is not exactly such a preference as virtue ought to have over vice, wisdom over folly, or pure mind over sensuality and selfishness. An extract from one of Clifton's letters, in which he describes Frank Henley, will give a tolerable idea of the characters of both.

'The youth has some parts, some ideas: at least he has plenty of words. But his arrogance is insufferable. He does not scruple to interfere in the discourse, either with me, Sir Arthur, or the angelic Anna! Nay sets up for a reformer; and pretends to an insolent superiority of understanding and wisdom. Yet he was never so long from home before in his life; has seen nothing, but has read a few books, and has been permitted to converse with this all-intelligent deity.

'I cannot deny but that the pedagogue sometimes surprises me with the novelty of his opinions; but they are extravagant. I have condescended oftener than became me, to shew how full of hyperbole and paradox they were. Still he has constantly maintained them, with a kind of congruity that astonished me, and even rendered many of them plausible.

'But, exclusive of his obstinacy, the rude, pot-companion loquacity of the fellow is highly offensive. He has no sense of inferiority. He stands as erect, and speaks with as little embarrassment, and as loudly as the best of us; nay, boldly asserts, that neither riches, rank, nor birth have any claim. I have offered to buy him a beard, if he would but turn heathen philosopher. I have several times indeed bestowed no small portion of ridicule upon him; but in vain. His retorts are always ready; and his intrepidity, in this kind of impertinence, is unexampled.

'From some anecdotes which are told of him, I find he is not without personal courage: but he has no claim to chastisement from a gentleman. Petty insults he disregards; and has several times put me almost beyond my forbearance by his cool and cutting replies. His oratory is always ready; cut, dry, and fit for use; and d——d insolent oratory it frequently is.

'The absurdity of his tenets, can only be equalled by the effrontery with which they are maintained. Among the most ridiculous of what he calls first principles is that of the equality of mankind. He is one of your levellers! Marry! His superior! Who is he? On what proud eminence can he be found? On some Welsh mountain, or the peak of Teneriffe? Certainly not in any of the nether regions! Dispute his prerogative who dare! He derives from Adam; what time the world was all "hail fellow well met!" The savage, the wild man of the woods, is his true liberty-boy; and the ourang-outang, his first cousin. A lord is a merry andrew, a duke a jack-pudding, and a king a tom-fool: his name is man!

'Then, as to property, 'tis a tragic farce; 'tis his sovereign pleasure to eat nectarines, grow them who will. Another Alexander he; the world is all his own! Aye, and he will govern it as he best knows how. He will legislate, dictate, dogmatise, for who so infallible? Cannot Goliah crack a walnut?

'As for arguments, it is but ask and have: a peck at a bidding, and a good double handful over. I own I thought I knew something; but no, I must to my horn-book. Then, for a simile, it is sacrilege; and must be kicked out of the high court of logic! Sarcasm too is an ignoramus, and cannot solve a problem; wit a pert puppy, who can only flash and bounce. The heavy walls of wisdom are not to be battered down with such popguns and pellets. He will waste you wind enough to set up twenty millers, in proving an apple is not an egg-shell; and that *homo* is Greek for a goose. Duns Scotus was a school-boy to him. I confess he has more than once dumb-founded me with his subtleties. But, pshaw! it is a mortal waste of words and time to bestow them on him.'—Vol. II.

With respect to Mr. Holcroft's principles as they are delivered in Anna St. Ives, I shall here attempt to give a short sketch of them, of the train of events in which they originated, and of the seductiveness of the prospects which they held out to a mind not perfectly callous to the interests of humanity. Even could it be shewn that they were disgraceful to his penetration, yet they were certainly honourable to his heart, and they were highly honourable to human nature. It is indeed a little singular, that those who have augured most highly of the powers of our nature, and have entertained the most sanguine hopes of the future virtue and happiness of man, should so often have been considered as the worst enemies of society. But it seems that our self-love is not so much flattered by the idea of the progress we might hereafter make, as offended by that of the little we have already made. Reformers imprudently compliment mankind on what they might become, at the expense of what they are.

Mr. Holcroft was a purely speculative politician. He constantly deprecated force, rashness, tumult, and popular violence. He was a friend to political and moral improvement, but he wished it to be gradual, calm, and rational, because he believed no other could be effectual. All sanguinary measures, all party virulence, all provocation and invective he deplored: all that he wished was the free and dispassionate discussion of the great principles relating to human happiness, trusting to the power of reason to make itself heard, and not doubting but that the result would be favourable to freedom and virtue. He believed that truth had a natural superiority over error, if it could only be heard; that if once discovered, it must, being left to itself, soon spread and triumph; and that the art of printing would not only accelerate this effect, but would prevent those accidents, which had rendered the moral and intellectual progress of mankind hitherto so slow, irregular, and uncertain.

This opinion of the progress of truth, and its power to crush error, had been gaining ground in this country ever since the Reformation; the immense improvements in natural and mechanical knowledge within the last century had made it appear nearly impossible to limit the discoveries of art and science; as great a revolution (and it was generally supposed as great improvements) had taken place in the theory of the human mind in consequence of the publication of Mr. Locke's Essay; and men's attention having been lately forcibly called to many of the evils and abuses existing in society, it seemed as if the present was the era of moral and political improvement, and that as bold discoveries and as large advances towards perfection would shortly be made in these, as had been already made in other subjects. That this inference was profound or just, I do not affirm: but it was natural, and strengthened not only by the hopes of the good, but by the sentiments of the most thinking men.

As far as any practical experiment had been tried, the result was not discouraging. Of two revolutions that had taken place, one, that of America, had succeeded, and a more free and equal government had been established without tumult, civil discord, animosity or bloodshed, except what had arisen from the interference of the mother country. The other Revolution, that of France, was but begun: but it had at this time displayed none of those alarming features which it afterwards discovered. Whether the difference of the result in the latter case was owing to the external situation of the country, which exposed it to the inroads of a band of despots; or to the manners of the people, which had been depraved by a long course of slavery, which while it made freedom the more desirable, rendered them the more incapable of it; whether, I say, the French Revolution might not have succeeded, had not every means been employed to destroy and crush the good that might have been expected from it, is a question not to be discussed here: but at the period of which I am speaking, I believe I may say there were few real friends of liberty who did not augur well of it. A tyranny, which all our most esteemed writers had been endeavouring for the last hundred years to render odious and contemptible to the English people, had been overthrown; and this was hailed by all those who had been taught to value the principles of liberty, or the welfare of nations, as an event auspicious to France and to the world. The emancipation of thirty millions of people (so I remember it was considered at the time) was a change for the better, as great as it was unexpected: the pillars of oppression and tyranny seemed to have been overthrown: man was about to shake off the fetters which had bound him in wretchedness and ignorance; and the blessings that were yet in store for him were unforeseen and incalculable. Hope smiled upon him, and pointed to futurity.

With these feelings, and with these encouragements from the state of the public mind, reasoning men began to inquire what would be the ruling principles of action in a state of society, as perfect as we can suppose, or the general diffusion of which would soonest lead to such a state of improvement. And the answer was found, not so much in any real novelties, or heretofore unheard-of paradoxes, as in the most pure and simple principles of morality, differing from the common and received ones, no otherwise than in the severity with which they are insisted on, and in their application to a state of things in which the same indulgences, precautions, and modifications of our higher and paramount obligations, which are at present inseparable from the imperfection of our nature, would no longer be necessary. The whole of the *modern* philosophy (as far as relates to moral conduct), is nothing more than a literal, rigid, unaccommodating, and systematic interpretation of the text, (which is itself pretty old and good authority) 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' without making any allowances for the weaknesses of mankind, or the degree to which this rule was practicable; and the answer to the question, 'Who is our neighbour,' is the same, both in the sacred records, and in the modern paraphrase, 'He who most wants our assistance.' I have mentioned this coincidence (I hope without offence), to shew that the shock occasioned by the extreme and naked manner of representing the doctrine of universal benevolence, did not, and could not, arise from the principle itself, but from the supposition that this comprehensive and sublime principle was of itself sufficient to regulate the actions of men, without the aid of those common affections, and mixed motives, which our habits, passions, and vices, had taught us to regard as the highest practicable point of virtue. If, however, it be granted, not only that it is in itself *right* and *best*, but that a period might come, in which it would be *possible* for men to be actuated by the sole principles of truth and justice, then it would seem to follow that the subordinate and auxiliary rules of action might be dispensed with, being superseded by the sense of higher and more important duties.

Mr. Holcroft was among the foremost and most ardent of those who indulged their imaginations, in contemplating such an Utopian, or ideal state of society, and in reasoning on the manner in which the great leading principle of morality would then be reduced to practice. In such a state of things, he believed that wars, bloodshed, and national animosities, would cease; that peace and good-will would reign among men; and that the feeling of patriotism, necessary as it now is to preserve the independence of states, and repel the ravages of unprincipled and ambitious invaders, would die away of itself with national jealousies and antipathies, with ambition, war, and foreign conquest. Family attachments would also be weakened or lost in the general principle of benevolence, when every man would be a brother. Exclusive friendships could no longer be formed, because they would interfere with the true claims of justice and humanity, and because it would be no longer necessary to keep alive the stream of the affections, by confining them to a particular channel, when they would be continually refreshed, invigorated, and would overflow with the diffusive soul of mutual philanthropy, and generous, undivided sympathy with all men. Another feeling, no less necessary at present, would then be forgotten, namely, gratitude to benefactors; but not from a selfish, hateful spirit, or hardened insensibility to kind offices; but because all men would in fact be equally ready to promote one another's welfare, that is, equally benefactors and friends to each other, without the motives either of gratitude or self-interest. Promises, in like manner, would no longer be binding, or necessary: not in order that men might take advantage of this liberty to consult their own whims or convenience, and trick one another, but that by being free from every inferior obligation, they might be enabled more steadily and directly to pursue the simple dictates of reason and conscience. False honour, false shame, vanity, emulation, etc. would upon the same principle give way to other and better motives. It is evident that laws and punishments would cease with the cause that produces them, the commission of crimes. Neither would the distinctions of property subsist in a society, where the interests and feelings of all would be more intimately blended than they are at present among members of the same family, or among the dearest friends. Neither the allurements of ease, or wealth, nor the dread of punishment, would be required to excite to industry, or to prevent fraud and violence, in a state (such as has been supposed), where all would cheerfully labour for the good of all; and where the most refined reason, and inflexible justice actuating a whole community, could scarcely fail to ensure the same effects which at present result from the motives of honesty and honour. The labour, therefore, requisite to produce the necessaries of life, would be equally divided among the members of such a community, and the remainder of their time would be spent in the pursuit of science, in the cultivation of the noblest arts, and in the most refined social and intellectual enjoyments.

However wild and visionary this scheme may appear, it is certain that its greatest fault is in expecting higher things of human nature than it seems at present capable of, and in exacting such a divine or angelic degree of virtue and wisdom, before it can be put in practice, as without a miracle in its favour must for ever prevent its becoming any thing more than a harmless dream, a sport of the imagination, or 'an exercise in the schools.' But to consider a man as an immoral character, or a political delinquent, for having indulged in such speculations, is no less false or absurd, than to stigmatise any one as a bad member of the community for having written a treatise on the Millennium. Yet with respect to Mr. Holcroft, this appears to have been 'the very head and front of his offending.'

CHAPTER II

The first part of Hugh Trevor, a novel, appeared in 1794, and the remainder in 1797. This novel is a work of less genius than Anna St. Ives, but it is characterised by much sound sense, by a clear and vigorous style, by acute observation, and by many satirical, but accurate portraits of modern manners. As a political work, it may be considered as a sequel to Anna St. Ives; for as that is intended to develope certain general principles by exhibiting imaginary characters, so the latter has a tendency to enforce the same conclusions, by depicting the vices and distresses, which are generated by the existing institutions of society. A Lord and a Bishop are among the most prominent figures. That such characters exist in fact, there cannot be a doubt: that the satire is applied in too general and unqualified a manner, is an objection which may also be readily admitted; but it certainly is not necessary, in order to enforce the *imperfection* of existing institutions and manners, that the profligacy which he has ascribed to these characters should be universal. A very little of it is enough, and too much—were there any real and substantial remedy for the evil.

The story of Hugh Trevor is less connected and interesting than that of Anna St. Ives: the excellence of the work is to be judged of from detached scenes and passages, rather than from considering it as a whole. Among the most striking passages are the description of

Oxford, Wakefield's conversations with Hugh Trevor, the disputes with Trotman on the study of the law, the character of Olivia's aunt, which is in the best style of the old novels, the scene in the stage-coach between the aunt, Olivia, and Hugh Trevor, the description given by Glibly of the characters at the playhouse, and some of the scenes which occur in the history of Wilmot. The dialogues in Hugh Trevor are almost all of them highly spirited, and full of character, and the language exactly that of animated conversation. Mr. Holcroft would (as it might be expected,) have an advantage in this respect over novel-writers in general, from his habit of writing for the stage. Perhaps the finest things in Hugh Trevor, are, the account of an author, found in Wilmot's pocket, after he had attempted to drown himself, and the song of Gaffer Gray. Both these I shall extract, as they are short and detached, and, in my opinion at least, exquisite pieces of writing.

The paper found in Wilmot's pocket, after the rash, and almost fatal, act, to which he has been driven by repeated disappointment, and extreme distress, is as follows.

'This body, if ever it should be found, was once a thing, which, by way of reproach among men, was called an author. It moved about the earth despised and unnoticed; and died indigent and unlamented. It could hear, see, feel, smell, and taste, with as much quickness, delicacy, and force, as other bodies. It had desires and passions like other bodies, but was denied the use of them by such as had the power and the will to engross the good things of this world to themselves. The doors of the great were shut upon it; not because it was infected with disease, or contaminated with infamy; but on account of the fashion of the garments with which it was cloathed, and the name it derived from its forefathers; and because it had not the habit of bending its knee where its heart owed no respect, nor the power of moving its tongue to gloze the crimes, or flatter the follies of men. It was excluded the fellowship of such as heap up gold and silver; not because it did, but for fear it might, ask a small portion of their beloved wealth. It shrunk with pain and pity from the haunts of ignorance, which the knowledge it possessed could not enlighten, and from guilt, that its sensations were obliged to abhor. There was but one class of men with whom it was permitted to associate, and those were such as had feelings and misfortunes like its own, among whom it was its hard fate frequently to suffer imposition, from assumed worth and fictitious distress. Beings of supposed benevolence, capable of perceiving, loving, and promoting merit and virtue, have now and then seemed to flit and glide before it. But the visions were deceitful. Ere they were distinctly seen, the phantoms vanished. Or, if such beings do exist, it has experienced the peculiar hardship of never having met with any, in whom both the purpose and the power were fully united. Therefore, with hands wearied with labour, eyes dim with watchfulness, veins but half nourished, and a mind at length subdued by intense study, and a reiteration of unaccomplished hopes, it was driven by irresistible impulse to end at once such a complication of evils. The knowledge was imposed upon it that, amid all these calamities, it had one consolation—Its miseries were not eternal—That itself had the power to end them. This power it has employed, because it found itself incapable of supporting any longer the wretchedness of its own situation, and the blindness and injustice of mankind: and as, while it lived, it lived scorned and neglected, so it now commits itself to the waves; in expectation, after it is dead, of being mangled, belied, and insulted.'

The song of Gaffar-Gray is written in a less sombrous style, with a mixture of banter and irony. But it is distinguished by the same fulness of feeling, and the same simple, forcible, and perfect expression of it. There is nothing wanting, and nothing superfluous. The author has produced exactly the impression he intended.

'Ho! Why dost thou shiver and shake,
Gaffar-Gray!
And why doth thy nose look so blue?
"'Tis the weather that's cold,
'Tis I'm grown very old,
And my doublet is not very new,
Well-a-day!"

Then line thy worn doublet with ale,
Gaffar-Gray;
And warm thy old heart with a glass.
"Nay, but credit I've none;
And my money's all gone;
Then say how may that come to pass?
Well-a-day!"

Hie away to the house on the brow,
Gaffar-Gray;
And knock at the jolly priest's door.
"The priest often preaches
Against worldly riches;
But ne'er gives a mite to the poor,
Well-a-day!"

The lawyer lives under the hill,
Gaffar-Gray;
Warmly fenc'd both in back and in front.
"He will fasten his locks,
And will threaten the stocks,
Should he ever more find me in want,
Well-a-day!"

The 'Squire has fat beeves and brown ale,
Gaffar-Gray;
And the season will welcome you there.
"His fat beeves and his beer,
And his merry new year
Are all for the flush and the fair,
Well-a-day!"

My keg is but low, I confess,
Gaffar-Gray;
What then? While it lasts, man, we 'll live.
"The poor man alone,
When he hears the poor moan,
Of his morsel a morsel will give,
Well-a-day!"'

CHAPTER III

We have hitherto beheld Mr. Holcroft only in the light of an author, or as a private man: we have at present to consider him in that part of his history, which was the most interesting to the public, and the most honourable to himself, of any of the circumstances of his life;—his behaviour under that most unaccountable, unjust, and groundless prosecution, which was instituted against him for high-treason, in the year 1794. The account of this transaction will be given nearly literally from Mr. Holcroft's own 'Narrative of Facts,' published soon after. I shall only observe of this work, which is written in a style of manly and nervous eloquence, that it not only contains the most undeniable proofs of the author's innocence of the charge brought against him, and of the knowledge which the prosecutors themselves had of his innocence, but that it farther shews Mr. Holcroft's character in a most amiable and respectable point of view. His regard to his family and friends, the steady uprightness of his mind, his ardent love of liberty, his utter abhorrence of all violent and sanguinary measures, and the sincerity, and even enthusiasm with which he acted up to the principles he professed, are evident in every line of his narrative.

It was in the month of November, 1792, that he first became a member of the Society for constitutional information. The multitude of extraordinary events which at that period happened in France, excited people of all ranks to political inquiry; and men were roused to a conviction, which, though obvious, yet seemed a recent discovery, that the political institutions of all nations essentially influence the morals and happiness of the people, and that these institutions are capable of improvement. The good was no sooner conceived than an eagerness to enjoy it was begotten; and this eagerness was frequently so impatient, as to excite a dread, that even if it did not defeat, it might lamentably retard its own purpose.

At length, the apprehensions of those, who thought it their interest to prevent any kind of change, were awakened. Their numbers considerable, their wealth immense, their influence universal, their prejudices strong, and their appetites and passions almost their only means of enjoyment, they no sooner saw danger, than they conceived disgust for the supposed authors of it: and this disgust rapidly quickened into hatred. Animosity once conceived is generally mutual; and the passions of both parties seemed every day to become more and more inflamed, and to be pregnant with pernicious consequences.

Under such circumstances, it became (in Mr. Holcroft's opinion) the duty of every man to think seriously and act with vigour. Passengers in a storm labour at the pump, are upbraided if they linger, and in danger of being thrown overboard. Individual and general safety are the same; and the man who is not trusted with the helm, may yet aid to heave the lead, or cast the anchor.

Mr. Holcroft, believing that all men, and all actions contribute more or less to the general good, had long been accustoming himself to keep that good in view. Stimulated by the considerations just mentioned, and by the events that pressed with daily astonishment on the mind; he ardently applied himself to the study of man, and the means of promoting his welfare, and lessening the evils that result from his present vices and imperfections. The chief of the principles, to which this inquiry led, were that man is happy, in proportion as he is truly informed; that his ignorance, which is the parent of his misery and vices, is not a fault, but a misfortune, which can only be remedied by infusing juster principles, and more enlightened notions into his mind; that punishment, violence, and rancour, only tend to inflame the passions, and perpetuate the mistakes they are meant to cure; and that therefore, the best and only effectual means of ameliorating the condition of mankind, is by the gentleness of instruction, by steady inquiry, and by a calm, but dauntless reliance on the progressive power of truth.

These principles being firmly rooted in his mind, Mr. Holcroft naturally became the opponent of all violence, and a determined friend to the publication of truth; since by that alone, he thought the well-being of mankind could be promoted. With respect to the Society for constitutional information, of which he had become a member, he did not approve of many of their proceedings, nor was he altogether satisfied with the authority they seemed to assume of peremptorily deciding questions by a majority of votes, which he thought could only be decided by reason: but still he conceived that this was not a sufficient ground to absent himself from their meetings, as such an over-scrupulousness would exclude all those who were best calculated to prevent such societies, in their too great ardour to do good, from doing ill; since if he refused to act with men so long as they were guilty of mistake, he must banish himself wholly from their intercourse.

He entered this Society then with a firm determination to use every endeavour to prevent violence and acrimony, to communicate the truth he knew, or imagined he knew, and to stimulate others to do the same. Accordingly, while he remained a member of it, he never interfered with the framing of a single resolution: when questions were put, he sometimes voted; and sometimes spoke to declare his opinion, but was much oftener silent; either because he thought them frivolous, or such a mixture of right and wrong, as to leave him undecided. He little imagined that it would be possible to accuse their insignificant proceedings as treasonable: much less that he should be selected as one of the most wicked of the conspirators.

The apprehensions of ministry had been first publicly announced in the proclamation of the 21st of May, 1792: and the coercive measures on which they had determined, immediately appeared in parliamentary addresses, and the measures of the magistrates and municipal officers, throughout the kingdom. Associations were formed, and the danger of the constitution, from the wicked attempts of republicans and levellers, became the cry of what was called the aristocratic party. So active were these self-declared friends of government, and so loud in their asseverations of approaching ruin, the destruction of property, insurrection, and anarchy, that quiet people began to partake of the fears of these agitators; and ministry, by more proclamations, asserted that insurrections did actually exist, which the militia was called out to quell, when not a hand or foot was stirring on any such pretences within the confines of Great-Britain. Men even of respectable characters and honest intentions now thought it an heroical act of duty, to watch the conduct of their intimate friends, excite them to utter violent or seditious expressions, and afterwards to turn informers against the intemperance they had provoked. To avoid giving any opinion was impossible. Language the most outrageous, was employed to make those who were in the least suspected declare their creed; and if it were not entirely accommodating, the peaceable citizen, after being entrapped, was insulted, and turned, or frequently kicked, out of tap-rooms, coffee-houses, and public places. The impotence of the obnoxious party was every where demonstrated; yet the outcry of alarm increased. Church-and-king-mobs were proved, in courts of justice, to have been encouraged by the very men whose office it was to keep the peace: while no insurrection, or shade of insurrection, appeared on the part of the people, wishing for reform. In the same spirit, printers and booksellers all over the kingdom were hunted out for prosecution; and the tempest of insurrection and anarchy was so confidently affirmed to be rising and raging, that the House of Commons voted the suspension of the Habeas Corpus bill, on the ground that dangerous and treasonable conspiracies did actually exist.

The Society, of which Mr. Holcroft was a member, seemed with the progress of these events to increase in amazement; and it might almost be said, in stupefaction. This was visible in the thinness of its meetings, its feeble resolutions, and long adjournments. Each man saw himself the butt of obloquy. Each man knew that Mr. Reeves's association was sitting in a room of the same tavern immediately over his head; and that this association was the focus of the opprobrium cast on them all. They supposed themselves to be watched by the very waiters. Thus wantonly and unjustly set up as a mark for public reproach, it is not much to be wondered at, that some petulant ebullitions occasionally burst forth. But was this guilt so enormous? Was it high-treason?

When Mr. Holcroft first heard that a few of its members had been taken into custody, he felt the greatest astonishment. 'Surely,' he said, 'either there have been practices of which I am totally ignorant, or men are running mad!' The persons apprehended were severally, and some of them repeatedly examined before the privy council. The three estates of the kingdom had declared the existence of treason and conspiracy; and the nation seemed generally to credit the assertion. Mr. Holcroft had been told more than once, that a warrant was issued against him. Incredible as the rumour would have been at any other time, he now believed it to be true.

A warrant having according to report been issued against him, made it probable that he should also be examined before the privy council; and he therefore prepared for the event. The late John Hunter, and other medical men, had prescribed sea-bathing for him; and he intended to have gone out of town for this purpose. But on the first report of the warrant, he determined not to go, and took care to appear publicly, that he might not seem to evade inquiry. Many surmises and rumours prevailed during the summer of 1794. One week the persons in custody were immediately to be brought to trial: the next it was said the crown-lawyers had declared that a case of treason could not be made out, and that they would be tried for seditious practices. At length, when the affair seemed almost to have sunk into forgetfulness, it was suddenly revived; and a commission was appointed on the till then supposed highly improbable charge of high-treason. The proceeding astonished Mr. Holcroft, as well as others; but he had no idea it was intended that he should be involved in it.

Soon, however, assertions to the contrary were spread: and many serious reflections suggested themselves to his mind. 'Surely,' said he, 'this age has more general information, and therefore more virtue, more wisdom, than the past. There cannot be another meal-tub plot. No Titus Oates could now impose his execrable fictions on mankind. Or is it possible that sophistry may have convinced itself that it is better twelve men, the partisans of reform, should die, than that Government should seem to have disgraced itself by asserting the existence of a treasonable conspiracy without any proof?' At one moment he could not believe himself in danger: at the next, the facts that stared him in the face destroyed every ground of rational calculation, and left the mind bewildered in suspense. It was at this period that Mr. Holcroft addressed the following letter to his daughter and her husband, who were in Devonshire.[1]

'My Dear Friends and Children, The reason of my writing to you at this moment is to prevent any unnecessary alarm; to which, indeed, I hope you would not have been very liable, even if I had not written, and if you had previously heard the strange intelligence I am about to communicate, through any other channel.

'It is asserted in the Morning Post of to-day, and I have before received the same information from various people, that a bill is to be presented to the Grand Jury, containing a charge of high-treason against thirteen persons, of whom I am one. As it is impossible that either this or any other crime against the Government can be proved on me (my principles and practice having been so totally opposite to such supposed crimes) I hope, and most seriously recommend that you will feel the same tranquillity I do. The charge is so false and so absurd, that it has not once made my heart beat. For my own part, I feel no enmity against those, who endeavour thus to injure me; being persuaded, that in this, as in all other instances, it is but the guilt of ignorance. They think they are doing their duty: I will continue to do mine, to the very utmost of my power; and on that will cheerfully rest my safety. I must again conjure you to feel neither alarm nor uneasiness. Remember the most virtuous of men are liable to be misunderstood, and falsely accused. But the virtuous man has no need to fear accusation. If it be true that my name is in the indictment, it will oblige me again to defer the happiness of seeing you, and the hope of recruiting my health by the excursion. Of the latter it is true I have need, and to be a witness of your happiness would give me no small pleasure: but the man of fortitude knows how to submit to all necessities; and if he be wise, frequently to turn events which others consider as most disastrous, to some beneficent end. Shall I own to you, that though I could not wish to be falsely accused, yet being so accused, I now feel an anxious desire to be heard? Let my principles and actions be inquired into, and published: if they have been erroneous, let them become moral lessons to others; if the reverse, the instruction they will afford may more effectually answer the same purpose. I hope, Sophy, you know something of me: endeavour to communicate what you know to Mr. Cole, and your mutual fears will then surely be very few. Observe that, as I have yet received no notice whatever from Government, I have the above intelligence only from report. If it be false, I shall soon be with you: if the contrary, you of course will hear from me the moment I have any thing to communicate. Be happy, act virtuously, and disdain to live the slaves of fear.'

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[1] Sophy, Mr. Holcroft's second daughter, had a little before been married to Mr. Cole, a merchant at Exeter.

Newman-street, Sept. 30th, 1794.

On the same day he sent the following letter to the Morning Post, which was published the next day.

'*To the Editor of the Morning Post.*

'Sir, In your paper of yesterday, my name is mentioned among those said to be inserted in a bill to be presented to a Grand Jury on Thursday next, containing charges of high-treason. If this be the fact, I have no wish to influence the public opinion, by a previous affirmation of my own innocence: I desire only to appear before my country. However, as I have not been a day absent from home for more than twelve months, and never received from any magistrate the least intimation of any suspicion against me; till I have official notice, my own consciousness obliges me to consider your intelligence as unfounded.

'In either case, it is a duty I owe myself to declare that I am now, and always shall be, ready to answer every accusation.'

The see-saw of contradictory reports continued for some days. A daily paper asserted, and as it professed, with authority, that the rumour of Mr. Holcroft's being included in the indictment was absolutely false: and a friend, who had determined (should it prove true) to give him every aid in his power, quitted town the very day before the bill was returned. Mr. Holcroft was preparing to do the same. Not only he indeed, but all his friends had concluded that the report would prove false, it being so excessively improbable. In this mistake he remained till Monday, October 6th, at three in the afternoon; when another friend came running to inform him that he had that moment come from Hickes's Hall, where he had heard an indictment for high-treason read against twelve persons, of whom he was one. Mr. Holcroft's sensations were of a kind not easily to be described; but he neither felt excessive indignation, excessive alarm, nor any of those passions which might perhaps have been excusable in his situation.

The friend who had brought the intelligence, felt less determined. He was a man of an acute mind, but a lawyer; and knowing the equivocal spirit of law, and the hazard incurred from the ignorance or prejudice even of the best-intentioned jurymen, he advised immediate flight. Mr. Holcroft had, however, no great difficulty in convincing him that his resolution was taken. He had now to communicate the event with as much caution as possible to his family. And here he had a most painful scene to undergo. His father (who was now with him) in a passionate burst of tears, intreaties, and exclamations, conjured him to fly. His age, and the circumstances in which he had lived, rendered him a very unfit counsellor for such an occasion; and the only means Mr. Holcroft had of calming his agitated spirits, was by the firmness of his own behaviour, his declared resolution to face his accusers, and, by appealing to his own knowledge of him, how far it was possible he should be guilty.

The intrepidity of his behaviour inspired his parents and children with courage. He thought it prudent however to leave them, that he might consult with his own mind, and with some friends, concerning the properest mode of surrendering himself; and learning that the court was to meet the next day, at Hickes's Hall, he went to the house of his solicitor and friend, Mr. Foulkes, where, with some other persons, he supped. He did not return home, but slept here.

The next morning he appeared in court, accompanied by his solicitor and another gentleman of the law; where, as soon as the business of the court would permit, he thus addressed himself to Lord Chief Justice Eyre.

Mr. Holcroft. 'My Lord, being informed that a bill for high-treason has been preferred against me, Thomas Holcroft, by His Majesty's Attorney General, and returned a true bill by a Grand Jury of these realms, I come to surrender myself to this court, and my country, to be put upon my trial, that, if I am a guilty man, the whole extent of my guilt may become notorious; and, if innocent, that the rectitude of my principles and conduct may be no less public. And I hope, my Lord, there is no appearance of vaunting in assuring your lordship, this court, and my country, that, after the misfortune of having been suspected as an enemy to the peace and happiness of mankind, there is nothing on earth, after which, as an individual, I more ardently aspire than a full, fair, and public examination.—I have further to request, that your lordship will inform me, if it be not the practice in these cases, to assign counsel, and to suffer the accused to speak in his own defence? Likewise, whether free egress and regress be not allowed to such persons, books, and papers, as the accused or his counsel shall deem necessary for justification?'

Chief Justice. 'With regard to the first, Sir, it will be the duty of the court to assign you counsel, and also to order that such counsel shall have free access to you at all proper hours. With respect, Sir, to the liberty of speaking for yourself, the accused will be fully heard by himself, as well as by his counsel; but with regard to papers, books, and other things of that kind, it is impossible for me to say any thing precisely, until the thing required be asked. However, Sir, you may depend upon it, every thing will be granted to the party accused, so as to enable him to make his defence.—If I understand you rightly, you now admit that you are the person standing indicted by the name of Thomas Holcroft.'

Mr. Holcroft. 'That, indeed, my Lord, is what I cannot affirm—I have it only from report.'

Chief Justice. 'You come here to surrender yourself; and I can only accept of that surrender on the supposition that you are the person so indicted. You know the consequence, Sir, of being indicted for high-treason. I shall be under the necessity of ordering you into custody. I would not wish to take any advantage of your coming forward in person, indiscreetly, in this manner, without being called upon by the ordinary processes of the law. You should have a moment to consider whether you surrender yourself as that person.'

Mr. Holcroft. 'It is certainly not my wish, either to inflict upon myself unnecessary punishment, or to put myself in unnecessary danger. I come only as Thomas Holcroft, of Newman Street, in the county of Middlesex; and I certainly do not wish to stand more forward than an innocent person ought to stand.'

Chief Justice. 'I cannot enter into this point. If you admit yourself to be the person indicted, the consequence must be, that I must order you to be taken into custody to answer this charge. I do not know whether you are or are not Thomas Holcroft. I do not know you; and therefore it is impossible for me to know whether you are the person stated in the indictment.'

Mr. Holcroft. 'It is equally impossible for me, my Lord.'

Chief Justice. 'Why then, Sir, I think you had better sit still.—Is there any thing moved on the part of the crown with respect to this gentleman?'

Solicitor General. 'My lord, as I consider him to be the person against whom a true bill is found, I move that he be committed.'

Chief Justice. 'I do not know how many persons there may be of the name of Thomas Holcroft: it would be rather extraordinary to commit a person on this charge, if we do not know him.'

This produced a short consultation between the solicitor general, the other counsel for the crown, and Mr. White. They were evidently surprised, and not pleased, at his appearance; and one of them, Mr. Knapp, began an argument to prove that he admitted himself to be the person indicted. He was interrupted by the Chief Justice, who again asked if the counsel for the crown thought fit to move that he should be committed? which was accordingly moved by the Solicitor General; and he was taken into custody by a Sheriff's Officer, Mr. Cawdron.

After naming Messieurs Erskine and Gibbs for his counsel, Mr. Holcroft asked the bench whether he might be allowed an amanuensis, while he was preparing his defence; but this request was declined by the Chief Justice, unless it was urged on the score of health. Mr. Holcroft was really in a state of ill-health; but as that was not his motive for asking it, he would not take advantage of this circumstance.

The court then adjourned; but he was detained three quarters of an hour: the reason assigned was, that the warrant was making out; but Mr. Holcroft believed the true reason to be, that the crown-lawyers were consulting how he was to be treated, and sending to the higher powers for instructions.

About half-past one o'clock the same day, a person came to Mr. Holcroft's house, in Newman Street, inquired if he was at home, and seemed at first unwilling to tell his business. He said he came from Mr. Munden; but afterwards owned he was not a friend of Mr. Munden, but pretended that he had been with him to inquire Mr. Holcroft's place of abode. He repeatedly asked the Miss Holcrofts if they were sure he was not at home; and they by this time suspecting him to be an officer, replied, he might search the house, though he might be assured their father was not at home, for that he had never taught them to tell untruths; and to prove their sincerity, added, that he was gone to the Privy Council to surrender himself. 'No;' answered he; 'that he certainly is not; *for I am but just come from the Privy Council.*' He then shewed his watch, that they might take notice it was half-past one o'clock. Mr. Holcroft's daughters replied, that they might be mistaken, and if so, that he was gone to the Old Bailey.—Being now understood to be a messenger, they asked if he intended to come in and take their father's papers; for, on shewing his authority, he was at liberty to make any search. He replied, that *there was quite sufficient without the papers*; after which, he went away, saying, that if the accused had surrendered himself, it would save him trouble.

These circumstances being related to Mr. Holcroft, led him to believe that a messenger had been despatched from Hickes's Hall to the Privy Council; and that to preserve the decorum of authority, this person had then been sent to his house: for the effrontery of surrendering himself was by his prosecutors and their partisans thought intolerable.

After waiting a considerable time, the warrant at length appeared, and the prisoner was attended to Newgate by the officer and one of the under-sheriffs; both of whom behaved to him with great politeness. Here, instead of being committed to close confinement like the other persons accused, he was allowed the same liberty of walking in the court-yard, and visiting his fellow-prisoners, which is granted to persons confined for inferior crimes.

The step which Mr. Holcroft had taken, as soon as it was known, excited the admiration of his friends, and probably of his enemies: though the latter were careful to keep this feeling within their own bosoms. The hireling prints of the day immediately began to pour out their dastardly sneers and mechanical abuse against him, converting an act of true fortitude, arising from conscious integrity, into the vapouring of a hypocrite, who wished to gain the reputation of courage without the risk. The following paragraph appeared two days after in the St. James's Chronicle.

'Mr. Holcroft, the play-wright and performer, pretty well known for the democratical sentiments which he has industriously scattered through the lighter works of literature, such as plays, novels, songs, etc. surrendered himself on Tuesday at Clerkenwell Sessions House, requesting to know if he was the person against whom the Grand Jury had found a Bill for High Treason. After some little altercation, in which Mr. Holcroft seemed to affect some consequence, he was ordered into custody. This gentleman seems so fond of speechifying, that he will probably plead his own cause in part, though Counsel were assigned him. *We do not understand he is in any imminent danger ; and suppose, from his behaviour, he has the idea of obtaining the reputation of a martyr to liberty at an easy rate.* We have that respect for some efforts of his talents, that we really hope his vanity will be gratified *with having run the danger, without suffering the punishment, of a traitor !*'

What a pleasant kind of government that must be, which is so fond of playing at this mock tragedy of indictments for high-treason, with any person who wishes to gain popularity at their expense, that the danger arising from their prosecutions is made a subject of jest and buffoonery, even by their own creatures! This miserable scribbler seems not to have been aware, that while he was accusing Mr. Holcroft of vanity and shallow cunning, he was bringing the most serious charge against the Ministers ; as if they trifled with the lives and characters of an individual, on such absurd and improbable evidence, that not only the person himself, but every one else, must laugh at his supposed danger. It was, however, in consequence of this fine opportunity, thoughtlessly afforded him by his prosecutors, for ensuring popularity 'at an easy rate,' that Mr. Holcroft was afterwards shunned by numbers of plain, well-meaning people, who were persuaded that high-treason was a serious thing ; that he was branded as 'an acquitted felon ;' that he became a mark for venal pens and slanderous tongues ; that he met with continued unrelenting hostility in his attempts to succeed as a dramatic writer ; that he was at last driven from his country as a proscribed man ; that when abroad he was singled out, suspected, and pointed at as a spy ; and that after he returned home, harassed by repeated disappointment, he closed a life of literary labour and active benevolence, with a fear that his name might remain as a blot upon his family after his death. And all this, because Mr. Holcroft had, by some strange accident, through sport or wantonness, been included in an indictment for high-treason : for his innocence was so notorious, that at the time he delivered himself up, he was insulted by the partisans of the Ministers for having wished to purchase the reputation of a martyr at an easy rate ; and that he was afterwards acquitted without being even brought to a trial, there not being the least evidence, or shadow of evidence, against him. Mr. Holcroft was not only not called upon to make any defence, but he was prevented from making one, as

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altogether unnecessary and impertinent, the prosecution against him having been withdrawn. Could a prosecution of this kind reflect real disgrace on the person so accused and so acquitted?

Locked within the walls of Newgate, Mr. Holcroft had full time for meditation. His first duty was to defend himself by shewing the falsehood of the accusation: but it was a duty which at this time he knew not how to discharge. He had no documents, nor could he tell of what he was accused.

He had remained in this suspense a few days, when Mr. Kirby, the keeper of Newgate, one morning came, desired that he would follow him, and led him through the otherwise impassable gates to an apartment in his own house. Here he was introduced to Mr. White, the Solicitor for the Treasury, and his two clerks; and this gentleman presented him with the indictment, a list of witnesses, and another list of the jurymen summoned for these trials: informing him at the same time that the Crown would grant as many subpœnas, without expense, as he should think proper to demand. Mr. Holcroft received the indictment, bowed, withdrew, and was re-conducted to the place of confinement.

His eagerness to examine the charges brought against him, the list of the witnesses who were his accusers, and the names of the persons by some of whom he was to be tried, was great: so was the astonishment he felt after examining the papers. He was indicted with eleven other persons in the same bill, for whose actions he was to answer, when, or wheresoever committed, though totally without his knowledge or participation. There was not a specific statement of any one action of the prisoner: but general affirmations concerning the collective actions of twelve men, together with other unknown conspirators, which, with regard to himself at least, he knew to be absolutely, and without exception, false. A promiscuous list of 208 witnesses was also given him, nine-tenths of whom were utter strangers to him, in person, abode, and even name; and of whom not one had any possible charge to bring against him. Yet he was left, out of all this inexplicable confusion, to conjecture (if he could) who were his accusers; and of what they were to accuse him. Mr. Holcroft intended to have entered a protest to this effect against the indictment, but he was overruled by his counsel.

The Tuesday following the trials began. 'And perhaps this country,' says Mr. Holcroft, 'never witnessed a moment more portentous. The hearts and countenances of men seemed pregnant with doubt and terror. They waited, in something like a stupor of amazement, for the fearful sentence on which their deliverance, or their destruction, seemed to depend. Never surely was the public mind more profoundly agitated. The whole power of Government was directed against Thomas Hardy: in his fate seemed involved the fate of the nation, and the verdict of Not Guilty appeared to burst its bonds, and to have released it from inconceivable miseries, and ages of impending slavery. The acclamations of the Old Bailey reverberated from the farthest shores of Scotland, and a whole people felt the enthusiastic transport of recovered freedom.'

Though no person partook more largely than Mr. Holcroft of the general joy, it was not on his own account. It was a conviction which he could not get from his mind, that his accusers had never any intention of producing evidence against him. Yet knowing how dangerous it might be to be found unprepared, he had laboured at his defence with the same ardour as if he were sure of being brought to trial: and the belief that he should not, was the only thought that gave him pain. To be thus publicly accused, and not as publicly heard, to have it supposed through the kingdom that he was involved in transactions, which though surely not treasonable, were such as he could not but highly disapprove, and of which he never heard till the reports of the Secret Committee were published, this was an evil which he would have given his right hand to have avoided. After the trial of Mr. Tooke, he plainly foresaw that he should not be called upon for his defence. He hoped, however, that he should be permitted to state a few simple facts concerning himself in the open court: but neither was this allowed him.

Mr. Holcroft was committed to Newgate on the 7th of October, where he remained eight weeks within a day. On Saturday, November the 29th, he received the following notice.

'The King against Thomas Hardy, and others.

'I am directed, by Mr. Attorney-General, to inform you that it is his intention that you should be brought to the bar at the Old Bailey, on Monday morning next; and that a jury should then be sworn for your trial, but that he does not propose to give evidence against you upon this indictment.

Joseph White,
Solicitor for the Crown,
29th Nov. 1794.

'*To Thomas Holcroft,*
one of the defendants in
the above indictment.'

On Monday, December 1st, Mr. Bonney, Mr. Kyd, Mr. Joyce, and Mr. Holcroft, were put to the bar; and in the language of the court, honourably acquitted. The other gentlemen bowed, and retired: Mr. Holcroft attempted to speak, and the Chief Justice seemed at first willing that he should go on, though a thing not customary; but Mr. Holcroft having intimated that he should detain the court nearly half an hour, he was immediately ordered to withdraw. Whether he was not wrong in expecting such a favour, and consequently in subjecting himself to a refusal, I will not here pretend to determine; but I confess it was a mistake, which men in general may safely blame, for it proceeded from motives which few persons are capable of feeling.

The chief circumstances which Mr. Holcroft meant to have stated in the defence he had drawn up, were, that his prosecutors had proof, that, instead of being a traitor, a mover of war and rebellion, and a killer of kings, he was a man, whose principles and practice were the very reverse. That evidence to this effect had been given before the Privy Council; and that there was no evidence whatever that he was in any instance a disturber of the public peace. That in the Constitutional Society of which he was a member, and under pretence of which he had been indicted for high-treason, he was theoretically the adversary of all force whatever; and that practically he concurred with the members who were most desirous of promoting reform, in urging that it must be by the peaceable means of persuasion, by the conviction of the understanding, not by force of arms. The proofs which Mr. Holcroft had of these particulars, were the evidence of Mr. Sharp, the engraver, and Mr. Symmonds. Mr. Holcroft having written to Mr. Sharp, desiring an account of his examination, received the following answer.

'*Copy of my [that is, Mr. Sharp's] testimony, which I signed at the Privy-Council.*

'The Society for Constitutional Information adjourned, and left the delegates in the room. The most gentleman-like person (of the Corresponding Society), took the chair, and talked about an equal representation of the people, and of putting an end to war. Holcroft talked about the Powers of the Human Mind.'

'This' [says Mr. Sharp,] 'is the whole that I signed. The other particulars of the conversation before the Privy-Council are as follows.

'Mr. Holcroft talked a great deal about Peace, of his being against any violent or coercive means, that were usually resorted to against our fellow-creatures; urged the more powerful operation of Philosophy and Reason, to convince man of his errors; that he would disarm his greatest enemy by those means, and oppose his fury.—

Spoke also about Truth being powerful; and gave advice to the above effect to the delegates present, who all seemed to agree, as no person opposed his arguments. This conversation lasted better than an hour, and we departed. The next time the delegates met, Holcroft was not present. This is the substance of what I remember of that conversation.'

Mr. Sharp was again examined before the Grand Jury; and this was his evidence. 'I mentioned Mr. Holcroft's disposition and conversation, when we met, about reasoning men out of their errors, who was a sort of natural Quaker, and was for the peaceable means that philosophy and reason point out to convince mankind. He was *against violence of all kinds*; but did not believe in the secret impulses of the Spirit, like the Quakers.'

The evidence of Mr. Symmonds was to the same purpose.—Mr. Adams, also, the secretary of the Constitutional Society, had several times declared his utter astonishment that Mr. Holcroft in particular could be indicted; because of the repeated and ardent manner in which he, and every body had heard him declare his sentiments in favour of peace and non-resistance.

On evidence like this was Mr. Holcroft indicted and committed to prison as guilty of high-treason.

The only circumstance which seems to throw any light on this mysterious transaction, which resembles a dream, or the extravagance of a bewildered imagination, rather than any thing real, is the following. Some months before the presenting the bill of indictment, Mr. Holcroft had called, with another friend, on Mr. Sharp, who had been apprehended, but was suffered to remain in his own house in the custody of an officer. Mr. Holcroft made some remarks intimating his dislike of violence. This the officer, who was a King's messenger, but of a lower and more illiterate order, seemed to feel as an attack upon his profession; and turning to Mr. Holcroft, whom he no doubt conceived to be a dangerous person, he affirmed that he had seen him at the meetings of the Corresponding Society. This was denied; and he again asserted he had seen him there. The man who could imagine and persist in one falsehood, might imagine and persist in another. On his repeating his assertion, Mr. Holcroft said to him, 'It is a wicked lie, Sir.' The man afterwards said, that if he had not seen him at the Corresponding Society, he had seen him at Mr. Thelwall's lectures; to which Mr. Holcroft replied, that he had been present once, and never but once, at a lecture delivered by Mr. Thelwall. This short scene was, however, construed into a design to affront the officer, produce violence, and favour the escape of Mr. Sharp; over whom, on the man's reporting this tale at the Privy Council, a double guard was placed the next day.

Such is the history of the share which Mr. Holcroft had in the trials for High Treason.[1]

CHAPTER IV

Mr. Holcroft may be considered from this time as a public character; for the remainder of his life in a great measure received its colour from his conduct on this occasion, and from the opinion and feelings of the public with respect to him. These were of course much divided. That he had been accused of high-treason, was sufficient to draw forth the hatred, execrations, and unqualified abuse of one party; that he was an object of the open and rankling animosity of this party, was in like manner the cause of the favour he received from the violent and vulgar of the opposite party. But there was a third class of persons, inferior in number, as they necessarily would be, of whom Mr. Holcroft might perhaps be considered as the head, namely, those, who being detached either by inclination or situation, from the violence of either party, admired him for the firmness and honesty of his behaviour, and for the bold but benevolent tendency of his principles. His principles, indeed, were of such a kind, that they could not but strike and win upon the admiration of young and ingenuous minds, of those whose hearts are warm, and their imaginations strong and active, and whose generous and aspiring impulses seem almost to demonstrate the efficacy of disinterested and enlightened motives over the human mind, till it is hardened, depressed, distorted from its original direction, and bowed down under the yoke of example and prejudice. In this view of the subject, indeed, we should be tempted to assert, that men do not become what by nature they are meant to be, but what society makes them. The generous feelings, and higher propensities of the soul are, as it were, shrunk up, seared, violently wrenched, and amputated, to fit us for our intercourse with the world, something in the manner that beggars maim and mutilate their children, to make them fit for their future situation in life.

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[1] The remainder of Mr. Holcroft's pamphlet is taken up with Letters to different persons concerned in the prosecution, and the larger defence which he had prepared in case he should be brought to a trial. They evidently shew more virtue, firmness, and honesty, than prudence or management, and denote something of the raised tone of the public mind. In the letter to Erskine, which is a truly eloquent composition, the following *trait* is mentioned. While Erskine was examining the spy Alexander, who, had he not been detected, might have sworn away the life of Hardy; this eminent barrister, observing his downcast countenance, and suddenly interrupting him, exclaimed—'Look at the jury, Sir! Don't look at me. I have seen enough of you.'

Mr. Holcroft, in the second part of his defence, labours the point of a parliamentary reform; and among other proofs of the corrupt state of representation, cites the following curious one.

'The Borough of Gatton, within these two years, was publicly advertised for sale by auction: not sold for a single parliament; but the fee-simple of the Borough, with the power of nominating the two representatives for ever. On the day of sale, the celebrated auctioneer scarcely noticed the value of the estate. The rental, the mansion, the views, the woods and waters, were unworthy regard, compared to what he called *an elegant contingency*! Yes, the right of nominating two members to parliament, without the embarrassment of voters, was *an elegant contingency*! "Need I tell you, gentlemen," said he, glancing round the room with ineffable self-satisfaction, and exulting in what he called "the jewel, the unique, which was under his hammer; need I tell *you*, gentlemen, that this *elegant contingency* is the only infallible source of fortune, titles, and honours, in this happy country? That it leads to the highest situations in the state? And that, meandering through the tempting sinuosities of ambition, the purchaser will find the margin strewed with roses, and his head quickly crowned with those precious garlands that flourish in full vigour round the fountain of honour? On this halcyon sea, if any gentleman who has made his fortune in either of the Indies chooses once more to embark, he may repose in perfect quiet. No hurricanes to dread; no tempestuous passions to allay; no tormenting claims of insolent electors to evade; no tinkers' wives to kiss; no impossible promises to make; none of the toilsome and not very clean paths of canvassing to drudge through: but, his mind at ease and his conscience clear, with this elegant contingency in his pocket, the honours of the state await his plucking, and with its emoluments his purse will overflow.'

That love of truth and virtue which seems at all times natural to liberal minded youth, was at this time carried to a pitch of enthusiasm, as well by the extraordinary events that had taken place, as by the romantic prospects of ideal excellence which were pictured in the writings of philosophers and poets. A new world was opening to the astonished sight. Scenes, lovely as hope can paint, dawned on the imagination: visions of unsullied bliss lulled the senses, and hid the darkness of surrounding objects, rising in bright succession and endless gradations, like the steps of that ladder which was once set up on the earth, and whose top reached to heaven. Nothing was too mighty for this new-begotten hope: and the path that led to human happiness seemed as plain—as the pictures in the Pilgrim's Progress leading to Paradise. Imagination was unable to keep pace with the gigantic strides of reason, and the strongest faith fell short of the supposed reality. This anticipation of what men were to become, could not but have an influence on what they were. The standard of morality was raised high: and this circumstance must excite an ardent emulation in the minds of many persons to set an example of true and disinterested virtue, unshackled by the prejudices or interests of those around them. The curb of prudence was taken off; nor was it thought that a zeal for what was right could be carried to an excess. There is no doubt that this system would be taken advantage of by the selfish and hypocritical to further their own views at the expense of others: but it is equally certain that it would add new force to the practice of virtue in the liberal and well-disposed mind.

Kind feelings and generous actions there always have been, and there always will be, while the intercourse of mankind shall endure: but the hope, that such feelings and such actions might become universal, rose and set with the French revolution. That light seems to have been extinguished for ever in this respect. The French revolution was the only match that ever took place between philosophy and experience: and waking from the trance of theory to the sense of reality, we hear the words, *truth*, *reason*, *virtue*, *liberty*, with the same indifference or contempt, that the cynic who has married a jilt or a termagant, listens to the rhapsodies of lovers.[1]

The 'Narrative of Facts,' was shortly after followed by the 'Letter to Mr. Windham,' in consequence of the expression 'acquitted felon,' applied by him to the persons lately tried. This letter is written in the spirit of a philosopher addressing a philosopher. It is certainly one of the best productions of the day. It is temperate, firm, acute, and forcible. Of the spirit in which it is written, equally remote from insipid affectation, or vulgar abuse, the introductory paragraph may be given as an example. It is as follows.

'Sir, The members of the House of Commons have arrogated to themselves many customs and privileges; which they consider, some as rights to indulge in parliamentary invective, and others, as limitations to those rights. Personalities affecting members of that house, are contrary to order; but men, unprotected by the sanctified walls of St. Stephen's chapel, may be the objects of assertions, which, if made any where else, would subject the authors of them to such correction as the law affords; or as honour, half idiot, half demon, demands. For my own part, I should never attempt to unsheath the sword of the law, much less the sword of the assassin: at least, if it were possible to oblige me to the former, the case must indeed be extreme. Under such defence as the law affords, I have been, and may again be obliged to shield myself against false charges; for I have no better public protection. But that a man of keen sensibility, and quick apprehension, whose distinctions and discriminations are frequently so fine drawn, and so shaded, that like colours in the rainbow, their mingled differences cannot be discerned; that a man who labours to be so cautious in his logic, should so often be hurried into the spleen of a cynic, the rashness of a boy, and the petulance of a child, is something extraordinary. There may be many such characters, but they are seldom so situated, as to obtrude themselves so frequently and forcibly as you have done into public notice. However, when they do, they are well worthy the attention of the politician and the philosopher, the man of business and the man of science. My purpose in this address, is not to write a libel, or to display my talents for satire. It has a more worthy purpose. It is to warn you and the nation against the effervescence of your passions. The intemperance of public men is tremendously awful at all times; but when it plunges millions into all the miseries of war, it rises into inexpressible horror. It is strange, that from real benevolence of intention, mischiefs which fable ascribes to fiends, should be the result. Yet this apparent paradox has of late been too repeatedly, and too carefully proved. You, Sir, and that extraordinary man, Mr. Burke, whose kind, but erroneous heart, whose splendid, but ill-employed talents, have led you astray, are among the examples.'

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[1] The above passage was written in a state of perfect security against the return of that pleasant phrase, *divine right*. Every thing is by comparison.

It was not my intention to have troubled the reader with any farther remarks on the subject of the trial; but there is one passage in Mr. Holcroft's letter, which exposes the sophistry and the injustice of the phrase, which is the subject of it, in so clear and masterly a manner, that I cannot forbear quoting it.

'Figure to yourself, Sir, the first on the list of these acquitted felons, Hardy. What were his views? What his incitements? A man of no learning, excellent in his morals, simple in his manners, and whether they were wise or foolish, highly virtuous in his intentions. Do you imagine he meant to make himself prime minister? Were these the marks of a prime minister? Had he the daring spirit, the deep plans, and the towering genius of a Cromwell? No one will affirm things so extravagant. He was a good and an active man in his endeavour to procure a parliamentary reform. This he thought, and I think, would have been the greatest of public blessings. For this he was tried, and declared NOT GUILTY. The whole country rang with the verdict, and the affections of the people were divided between joy at his deliverance and their own, and the contemplation of an innocent man, who had so long been in danger of the most dreadful and barbarous death, the merciless law decrees. Compare such a man to an "acquitted felon," who has escaped by the means you have enumerated: a man, who so far from exciting the benevolent wishes of a whole people, keeps all who ever heard his name in a state of dread, lest he should meet them on the highway, or break into their houses by night, and murder them in their sleep. Some such action, perhaps many such, he has already committed. At last he is taken; and knowing no better mode, they hope by his death to be freed from their fears. They are disappointed: a flaw in the indictment, a misnomer, or some technical blunder is committed: he is set free, and they are again subject to his depredations, and to all their former terrors. Will you affirm, Sir, that there are any common qualities, any kindred sympathies, any moral resemblance, between such a man and Thomas Hardy?—Whatever the feelings of the people of England were before these trials, be assured they cannot now endure a repetition of such odious falsehoods. You could not be then ignorant of the public sentiment, and in your burning haste to do right, you could not be guilty of this intolerable wrong, were your imagination less heated, and your intercourse with different ranks of people more general. You may perhaps now and then hear a dissentient voice: but you usually mix with men, who, like the parrot educated on-board a man-of-war, can only repeat the same outrages, and the same insults. You hear nothing else, and nothing else can you say. Would, Sir, you would keep better company!'

The very just distinction which Mr. Holcroft draws between the errors of such men as Pitt and Dundas, who were actuated almost entirely by interest and ambition, and those of men, like Burke or Windham,[1] who were actuated almost entirely by imagination, system, and reasoning, shews that the letter-writer himself was not a vulgar politician; joining in the common cry of a party.

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[1] Though the character of Mr. Windham, as a statesman and orator, was less developed at that time, than it has been since, it seems to have been justly appreciated by our author. He considered him as the disciple of Mr. Burke; and it is certainly some distinction to be able to understand the arguments, and follow the enthusiastic flights of that great, but irregular mind. He is at present (with one exception) the ablest speaker in the House of Commons: but he is still, and ever will be nothing more than an imitator of Burke. There is in all his speeches, an infinite fund of wit, of information, of reading, of ingenuity, of taste, of refinement, of every thing but force and originality: but of these last, there is a total absence. All is borrowed, artificial, cast like plaster figures in a mould. The creations of his mind are as multiplied, and they are as brittle. Perhaps it may be thought that the want of originality is the last thing which should be objected to this delightful speaker, all whose sentences sparkle with singularity and paradox. But this effect is equally mechanical with the rest. Real originality produces occasional, not systematic paradox. He who always waits to contradict others, has no opinion of his own. It is as easy to predict the side which Mr. Windham will take on any question as to guess what the first old woman you meet, would think on the same subject; for you may be sure that his opinion will be the contrary of hers. His creed is a sort of antithesis to common sense, and he is as much the slave of vulgar prejudices in always opposing, as if he always yielded to

CHAPTER V

'Love's Frailties' came out in the beginning of 1794, at Covent-Garden. This play met with indifferent success, of which the principal cause was a supposed allusion to political subjects in some passages. One of these in particular excited the most violent resentment: 'A sentence in itself so true,' says Mr. Holcroft, 'as to have been repeated under a thousand different modes; and under a variety of forms and phraseology, to have been proverbial in all countries.' This obnoxious passage was the one, in which Craig Campbell, when insulted by a fashionable coxcomb, who asks what profession he was bred to, says that 'he was bred to the most useless, and often the most worthless, of all professions, that of a gentleman.' In this comedy, the author has more pointedly than in any other, set up the claims of worth and virtue, against the arrogant assumptions of wealth and rank. That virtue alone confers true dignity, has however been the common-place theme of teachers of morality and religion, in all ages. But such at this time, was the irritation of party feeling, that to exhibit the force of this trite maxim on the stage, seems to have been regarded as an innovation on common sense, and as big with the seeds of social disorganisation.

'The Deserted Daughter,' 'The Man of Ten Thousand,' 'The Force of Ridicule,' and 'Knave or Not,' successively appeared in 1795, 1796, 1797, and 1798. The three last of these appeared at Drury-Lane. 'The Deserted Daughter,' and 'He's much to Blame,' were acted at Covent-Garden.

Of all these 'The Deserted Daughter' was received with the greatest applause, and it is perhaps the best of Mr. Holcroft's serious comedies. The characters of Mordent, of Lady Ann, and particularly of the faithful old servant, Donald, are drawn with great force and feeling. The character of Mordent is that of a philosopher, moralizing on the passions and vices of other men, and hurried away by his own. He has abandoned, or refused to own a daughter, the offspring of a former clandestine marriage, in order to avoid the sneers of the world, and the contempt of the rich and powerful connexions of his second wife. He maintains and brings her up as a natural daughter, but without seeing or acknowledging her. This the girl, who has a high spirit

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them. Originality consists in considering things as they are, independently of what others think, singularity is mere common-place transposed. The one requires the utmost exercise of the judgment, the other suspends the use of it altogether. [These remarks were written in 1810, before Mr. Windham's death.]

and quick sensibility, resents as an unmerited punishment; and determines either to be suffered to cast herself at her father's feet, and for once receive his blessing, or to throw herself on the mercy of strangers. In consequence of this, she is decoyed into a house of ill fame, by one of the hoary priestesses of vice, under pretence of affording her employment at her needle; and here she is in danger of falling into the hands of one of Mordent's profligate friends, who is himself accessary to the plot for carrying her off, at the moment that, by the indefatigable zeal of Donald, who had traced her to this abode of infamy, she is discovered to be his daughter. The scenes which follow this discovery are highly interesting; and through the whole of the character of Mordent, the conflict between a sense of duty, pride, and dissipation, is pourtrayed with strong touches of truth and nature. Cheveril is a lively, amusing character, and represents with a good deal of risible effect, one of those careless, good-natured young fellows, who would be thought 'sad wicked dogs,' but cannot prevail on themselves to do any harm.

Dorington, 'The Man of Ten Thousand,' may be considered as a benevolent Timon. After living in the most splendid and profuse hospitality, he suddenly loses his immense wealth, and with it his friends; but he does not at the same time lose either his senses or his philosophy. He preserves in the midst of the most mortifying reverses, the same calm dignity, and evenness of mind. Great as this effort of heroism is, it is managed in such a manner as not to appear unnatural or extravagant. Olivia, his mistress, is by no means so interesting a character. She is the blemish of the piece. Her notions of virtue are too fastidious by half, and she exacts conformity to her standard of perfection, with a dogmatical severity, which would scarcely sit well on a Stoic. Neither is her behaviour explained to Dorington in so satisfactory a manner as it ought to have been. The subordinate characters of Herbert and Annabel are described with extreme tenderness and simplicity. They exhibit an amiable picture of those qualities which often spring directly from a guileless heart, without the artificial refinements of sentiment or reason. Hairbrain is a character of the same school, and must have had a very good effect in the hands of Bannister, who played it. Kemble and Miss Farren were the representatives of Dorington and Olivia.

'Knave or Not,' as well as 'The Man of Ten Thousand,' was brought out at Drury-Lane. Its success was not very flattering. The advertisement prefixed by the author to the published play, will explain some of the reasons of this, as well as describe the most striking features of the play itself.

'The unrelenting opposition, which the productions of the author of the present comedy have experienced for several years, is well known to those who pay attention to our public amusements. It is not for him to pronounce how far this opposition has been merited by inability. Since the appearance of the Road to Ruin, his comedy of the Deserted Daughter only has escaped: and that, as he imagines, because it was not known on the first night of its performance, by whom it was written. Love's Frailties, The Man of Ten Thousand, and Knave or Not, have sustained increasing marks of hostility: so that the efforts made to afford rational amusement to the public, emolument to the author, and improvement to morals, have been rendered feeble, and almost ineffectual. In the last instance, one mistake appears to have pervaded the majority of the spectators. It was imagined that the author himself was as unqualified a libeller of mankind as Monrose: in which character the writer's individual sentiments were supposed to have been incorporated. Those who have read his other works cannot surely attribute to him any such indiscriminate misanthropy. The accusation that has been most generally made against him is, that he thinks men capable of gradations of virtue, which others affirm they can never attain. Persons, who have made the human mind their study, have discovered that guilty men exert the whole force of their faculties to justify their own course of action to themselves. To this principle the writer was strictly attentive in pourtraying the character of Monrose. His design was to draw a man of genius, misled by his passions, reasoning on his actions, systematising them, condemning them in principle, but justifying them in practice, and heating his imagination by contemplating the crimes of others; that he might still retain that respect for himself, of which the strongest minds, even in the last stages of vice, are so tenacious. How far that spirit of faction, commotion, and anarchy, of which the author has long been, and is still, so vehemently accused, is to be traced in the present comedy, may now be seen. Sincerely desirous of giving no offence, the passages which were most disapproved, or to speak more accurately, reprobated, on the first night, have since been omitted in representation; but they are printed between inverted commas, that the cool judgment may decide whether the author could have been so insane as actually to intend to inflame the spectators, and increase a spirit of enmity between men of different sentiments: whom could he reconcile, he would account it the most heart-consoling action of his life.

'Before the comedy appeared, all parties were anxious that no sentence or word should be spoken, which could be liable to misrepresentation. Some few passages, therefore, are committed to the press, which never were spoken on the stage; particularly the passage, where Monrose inquires into his qualifications for being a lord. A few years ago, this would have been common-place satire; and it is a subject of no little regret, that at present local and temporary applications are so liable to be made where none are intended.'

The jealousy which was thus manifested of sentiments, either of liberty or public virtue, was perhaps as inconsiderate as it was unjust. When the tragedy of Cato was first played, at a time when party zeal ran high, the Whigs applauded all the strong passages in the play, as a satire on the Tories; and the Tories were as loud in their applause as the Whigs, to shew that the satire was unfelt. But the 'horrors' of the French Revolution were, it seems, to become a Medusa's shield to screen every species of existing vice or folly from the glance even of ridicule, and to render them invulnerable and incorrigible. To stickle obstinately for the abuses to which any system is liable is tacitly to identify the system with the abuse.

In the characters of Susan and Jonas in this play, Mr. Holcroft has been guilty of that common vice among the authors of the present day, of trusting less to the characters themselves, than to the persons who were to act them. They are well adapted to shew the powers of acting in Mrs. Jordan, and Bannister, who might probably make them amusing or interesting; but they certainly stand in need of this foreign aid to produce such an effect.

'He's much to Blame' was acted at Covent-Garden in 1798, with great and deserved success. It is a truly elegant comedy. The characters, particularly that of Sir George Versatile, are amusing and original; and the situations, which arise in the progress of the story, give birth to some of the most natural and delicate strokes of passion. The scene at the masquerade, where Maria is discovered by Sir George, is perhaps the most striking; the unaffected and artless expression of her feelings produces an effect which is irresistible. The easiness of Sir George's temper, and the facility with which he accommodates himself to other people's humours, without any design or hypocrisy, are admirably described. The passions are less strongly moved in this comedy than in the Deserted Daughter, but they are moved with less effort, and with more pleasure to the reader. Neither has it any thing like the same bustle and broad effect as the Road to Ruin: but in ease, lightness, and a certain graceful simplicity, neither sinking into insipidity on the one hand, nor 'o'erstepping the modesty of nature' on the other, it is superior to almost every other modern production. It is the finest specimen Mr. Holcroft has left of his powers for writing what is commonly understood by *genteel comedy*.

The comedy of 'He's much to Blame' was offered to the theatre in the name of a friend; an artifice to which the author, notwithstanding his dislike to every species of insincerity, was obliged to resort more than once.

He informs us in a short advertisement that he was indebted for some hints in this play to *Le Complaisant*, a French Comedy, and the Clavigo of Goethe.

'The Inquisitor,' brought out soon after at the Haymarket, and 'The Old Clothesman,' an afterpiece, at Covent-Garden, were unsuccessful.

CHAPTER VI

Having brought Mr. Holcroft's literary history down to the time when he left England, I shall throw together, in the present chapter, such private incidents as occurred within this period, and as have not been already noticed.

After the appearance of the comedy of Duplicity, in 1782, Mr. Holcroft left his house, in Southampton Buildings, and went to live in Mary-le-bone Street. He afterwards hired a house, for a short time, in Margaret-Street, in conjunction with his friend, Bonneville. In 1789, or the beginning of 1790, he removed into Newman-Street, where he continued till a short time before his going abroad, in 1799, when he took lodgings in Beaumont-Street, near the New Road.

In the year 1786, Mr. Holcroft first became acquainted with Mr. Godwin. This friendship lasted for near twenty years. It was broken off by an unhappy misunderstanding, some time after Mr. Holcroft's return from the continent; and they did not see each other, in consequence of the coolness that took place, till they met for the last time a little before Mr. Holcroft's death.

It was Mr. Holcroft who reviewed Mr. Godwin's celebrated work on Political Justice, in the Monthly Review, 1793. It may be supposed that the Review was a favourable one. Mr. Holcroft at this time constantly wrote articles in the Monthly Review, and was on friendly terms with Griffiths, the proprietor. But it seems the latter was considerably alarmed at the boldness of some of Mr. Godwin's principles, and still more staggered at the accounts he had heard of them. He threw himself on Mr. Holcroft's known attachment to the interest of the Review not to commit its character by undeserved praise. Griffiths, however, probably found soon after that the *common place* character of the Review had been endangered; and the first opportunity was seized to retrieve the mistake, by retracting their opinion *hautement* in the Review of Mr. Malthus's publication.

The marriage of Mr. Holcroft's eldest daughter with Colonel Harwood took place in the year 1796.

Immediately after his release from prison, in 1794, he hurried into Devonshire to see his daughter (Sophy), whom he believed to be dying. His apprehensions, however, were groundless. While he remained in the country, he had a fall from a tree, which had nearly proved fatal to him, and which brought on an occasional palpitation of the heart; to which he was ever after subject, on using any sudden or violent exertion.—Mr. Holcroft had, some years before, shortly after the appearance of the Road to Ruin, been attacked by a paralytic affection, which he believed to have been the effect of too severe and constant application. Indeed, when we recollect the number and variety of Mr. Holcroft's productions, it is evident that either his facility or industry must have been wonderful. Perhaps there is no instance of a man, who passed through so much literary drudgery in voluminous translations, &c. and who was at the same time continually employed in the most lively efforts of the imagination. His resolute perseverance in pursuits so opposite, and apparently incompatible with each other, is a proof both of the activity and steadiness of his mind.

The relaxations in which Mr. Holcroft indulged, were few and regular. He was fond of riding; and, for some years, kept a horse, which had generally high blood in its veins. In 1787, he bought a poney of his father, which he valued so highly, that he refused to part with it for forty guineas. The French are not great equestrians; and Mr. Holcroft one day amused himself rather maliciously, in making a friend from Paris mount this poney, who was extremely alarmed at the tricks he began to play, though he was really in no danger.

Mr. Holcroft also belonged to a musical club, of which Shield, Villeneux, Crompton, Clementi, and Solomon, were members. From this he afterwards withdrew on account of the expense attending it.

His love for the arts sometimes subjected him to temptations which were not consistent with strict economy. He once gave a considerable sum of money for a couple of Cremona fiddles at a sale; one of which he afterwards presented to his friend Shield.

It may be supposed that that part of Mr. Holcroft's time which he could spare from his studies, was chiefly devoted to the society of literary friends. He, however, gave few dinner-parties, and those were not ostentatious, and consequently not expensive. When a friend dined with him, a bottle of wine was usually produced after dinner; but with respect to himself, he was extremely abstemious in the use of liquor, and the habits of his friends were rather those of philosophers than Bacchanalians. A little story, which the mention of this subject has brought to my recollection, paints the characteristic simplicity of Mr. Holcroft's father in an amusing light. Shortly after Mr. Godwin's first acquaintance with Holcroft, he was invited to dine with him one day, when the old gentleman was on a visit to his son. After dinner Mr. Holcroft happened to go out of the room; and during his absence, Mr. Godwin helped himself to a glass of wine. This was remarked as a flagrant breach of the rights of hospitality by the old man, and he took the first opportunity to caution his son against Mr. Godwin 'as a very bad man; for that while he was out of the room, he, Mr. Godwin, had taken the bottle, and without saying any thing, poured himself out a glass of wine.' This laughable discovery would hardly have been made, if considerable care and economy had not generally characterised Mr. Holcroft's table. He seems indeed to have observed through his whole life, the greatest moderation, even to a degree of parsimony, in his mode of living. The only extravagance with which he could reproach himself was in the occasional gratification of that inordinate love which he had for every thing connected with learning, or the fine arts. A fine-toned instrument, a curious book, or a masterly picture, were the baits which luxury always held out to him, and to which he sometimes imprudently yielded. He once bought a complete set of the *Fratres Poloni*, though he did not understand the language in which they wrote. Books and pictures were his chief articles of expense: the former he might think necessary to his own pursuits as an author; and the latter he looked upon as a lucrative speculation; for it is not to be supposed that he often bought pictures unless he considered them as a bargain. The worst of it was, that the ardour of his mind for whatever he engaged in, and that confidence in his own judgment, which is common to men of strong feelings and active minds, too frequently deceived him. Among the purchases which Mr. Holcroft at this time made, was one which he supposed to be the original picture of Sion House, painted by Wilson. He was eager to show this prize to his friends; and to one in particular, who expressed some doubt of its genuineness. To this Mr. Holcroft replied, by pointing to a touch in one part of the picture, which he said no copyist could imitate. A few days after, however, he came to the same friend, and told him that he had been right in his conjecture, for that he had now got the real original, and that the other was but a copy. He afterwards sold the copy to Bannister for five guineas. The second purchase was a real Wilson, and one of the finest landscapes he ever painted.

Mr. Holcroft occasionally made excursions into different parts of England, and once or twice went to see his father, who seldom remained long in the same place. In 1788 he made a journey of this kind to visit him at Haslington in Cheshire. Of the particulars of this journey Mr. Holcroft has left an amusing sketch in a memorandum-book, which I shall here transcribe.

'May 24th, 1788. Received a letter from my father, alarmed, supposed him dying. Went immediately to take coach. Set out on the 25th, in the Manchester Commercial Coach for Haslington. An ignorant Cambridge scholar, a boorish country attorney, a pert travelled officer, a vain, avaricious, rheumatic old woman, and a loving young widow. Dined at Holkliff in company with outside passengers. Pride of inside ones. Tea at Chapel Brompton. A sandwich at Lutterworth. Widow leaves the coach. Quaker taken up at Hinckliff, but four and twenty, conceived himself a wit, rude to the old woman. Breakfast at Litchfield. Resign my place to a distressed damsel, and ride outside to Stafford. Cankwood coal-pits. Village of Slade. Remembrance of former times, youthful distresses, ass and coals blown down, white bread of Rugely, pottery journeys, &c. Pleasant banks of the Trent. Various seats, parks, pleasure-grounds, &c. Quaker takes his glass at Stafford, becomes more talkative and rude, which he supposes witty. Is told he is carnally inclined, and becomes suddenly abashed. Such is the force of habit and education. Lose the lawyer, dine at Newcastle. Quaker listens to learned poetical discourse on unities, Shakspeare, Moliere, Boileau, Pope, Gresset, Rousseau, Voltaire, Milton, etc. in raptures. Old woman displays her whole stock of great discernment, *i.e.* vanity. Stop at Talk. Waggon blown up: concussion felt several miles. Ostler of Talk o' the Hill going to see his sweetheart, drove down the hill for the waggoner: smith at work saw the gunpowder running out, and called to lock the wheel, or the waggon would be blown up. Was not heard, or it was impossible to stop the waggon. Horse's shoe supposed to have struck fire, and caught the train. Body of the ostler dismembered, and blown with one of the horses through the wall of a house; his leg and arm found some days after under the rubbish of a blown-down wall. All the horses killed. Many women and children killed, others maimed—the glass of the windows shivered into their faces and breasts—their shrieks terrible. Deep sands of Cheshire. New-built village of Wheelock, between Haslington and Sandbach. Joy at finding my father in no danger. Simple hospitality of farmer

Owen. News of my arrival spread through the village. Bashful, boorish curiosity. Village scandal. Informed of the character of each individual; one accused of pride, another of selfishness, drunkenness, &c. A brutal broken butcher, who had spent a good fortune, the pest and terror of the place. Runs naked at prison-bars in Crewe Park, is horse-whipped by the Squire's order. Informs against his brother Fox and farmer Owen; confuted, and punished for having killed hares himself, though unable to substantiate his own charge. Maims cattle, &c. Is the terror of my father. Tricks of my father's landlord. Promises portions with his daughters, and when married, tells the husbands he will pay them the interest. Clerk of the parish, the barber, cobbler, ostler, and musician of the village. Lady's maid returned from her travels, visits the village and her friends, speaks gibberish, is reported to understand language better than myself. Psalm-singing vanity of the clerk humbled. Village ideas of London. Cheshire dairies. Excursion to Crewe Cottage. Poetic ideas. Returned to write down some lines, nearly extempore. Crewe and Sheridan. The first a great man among the neighbouring boors, and his own footmen; the latter in the House of Commons, among the first men in the nation, or in the world. Welch manners. Red woollen shirts. Sunday mirth. The women till the earth, the men sit and smoke. Goat's milk rich. Went to Nantwich. Inscription on a house curiously built. "Thomas Clease made this house in the XVIII yeare of the reane of our noble Queene Elezabeth." Thomas Holcroft, a white-cooper at Boscow, near Ormskirk. Richard Fairhurst, farmer in the same neighbourhood, my father's first cousin. Dobson, his uncle. My father born on Martin's Muir, removed to Sheepcote hills, went to school at Rudderford.'

Mr. Holcroft's father lived in the latter part of his life near Knutsford, where he had married again. Mr. Holcroft allowed him 20l. *per annum*, which, with a little shop and garden that he kept, maintained him comfortably. He allowed 12l. a year to his widow after his death, which happened in 1797. A tomb-stone was erected to his memory by his son's desire, with the following inscription: 'Here lies the body of Thomas Holcroft, who departed this life—1797, aged 80. He was a careful father, a kind husband, and an honest man.' He was buried in Peavor church-yard, near Knutsford.

Mr. Holcroft's affairs soon after became considerably involved, partly through the failure of the polygraphic scheme in which he had foolishly embarked several hundred pounds, but chiefly from a run of ill fortune at the theatre. He was obliged to sell his effects, books, and pictures. These it may be supposed did not fetch near their value; and the parting with the two last, particularly his books, Mr. Holcroft felt almost as the severing of a limb from the body. His plan was to retire to the Continent, both for the sake of economy, and with a view to establish a literary correspondence, and send over translations of such works as it might be advantageous either to the theatres or the booksellers to accept. Mr. Holcroft left England for Hamburgh in May, 1799. Whether it was just that a man who had unremittingly devoted his whole life to literary and philosophical pursuits, who had contributed highly to the public amusement, who had never entered into the intrigues or violent feelings of any party, and whose principles necessarily rendered him an inoffensive and peaceable member of society, whose end was the good of mankind, and whose only weapon for promoting it was reason; whether it was just that such a man should become the victim of political prejudice, and because he had been once made the subject of a false accusation, should be exposed to unrelenting persecution afterwards from those who seemed to think that unprovoked injury could only be expiated by repeated insult, is a question which may at least admit of doubt in the minds of most thinking persons.

Before Mr. Holcroft left England, he married Louisa, the daughter of his friend Mercier. Of his marriage with this lady it is needless to say more at present, than that Mr. Holcroft found all that happiness in it which he had promised himself from a union with a young, sensible, accomplished, and affectionate wife.

CHAPTER VII

Of that part of our author's life, which includes the last two years he spent in England before his going abroad, I am enabled to give the reader a more satisfactory account from his own papers. During almost the whole of this time, he kept a diary, and though this diary is not filled with great events, or striking reverses of fortune, it exhibits a perfect picture of the life, habits, and amusements of a literary man. It is my wish to bring the reader as nearly acquainted as I can with the subject of these memoirs; and I know no better way of doing this, than by exhibiting in his own words almost every thought or circumstance which passed through his mind during the above period. From hence we may form some notion of the rest. This diary will occupy a very disproportionate space to the rest of the work; but if it should be found tedious, I shall have erred grievously in judgment. There are some personalities in the original which are omitted; and others which may still be thought improper. But I believe no greater liberties are taken with the names of living characters, than are to be found in Boswell's Life of Johnson, and other sources of literary anecdote.

Mr. Holcroft began his Diary in June, 1798.—It is as follows.

'I have long felt a desire to keep memorandums of the common occurrences of life, and have now made a determination which I think will not easily be shaken, to keep a

DIARY. 1798.

June 22*nd.*—Called on Mr. Armstrong, relative to my disease; advises me to take oil of almonds, and rhubarb. Called on Mr. Shield, saw him—On Mr. and Mrs. Opie, both ill.—Wrote to Mr. Reynolds, bookseller, to settle the account—Wrote to Mr. Colman, who called when I was out.—Went to Debrett's: the opinion of Mr. Weld is, that the force sent over by government will be sufficient to quell the Irish insurrection *for the present*: believes Dundas averse to the coercion used in that country, and to the Beresfords, &c. R. Ad— says Windham, out of the house rails at the Irish system, that Lord Fitz— the D— D— &c. are averse to it; that the D— P— is for it, as well as that part of the cabinet, called the King's friends. Professor Porson dined with me: made as usual numerous amusing quotations, and among the rest cited the following passage from Middleton's preface, as one of the most manly, beautiful, and full of genius that he had ever read. "I persuade myself that the life and faculties of man, at the best but short and limited, cannot be employed more rationally or laudably than in the search of knowledge; and especially of that sort which relates to our duty, and conduces to our happiness. In these inquiries, therefore, wherever I perceive any glimmering of truth before me, I readily pursue and endeavour to trace it to its source, without any reserve or caution of pushing the discovery too far, or opening too great a glare of it to the public. I look upon the discovery of any thing which is true, as a valuable acquisition to society; which cannot possibly hurt or obstruct the good effect of any other truth whatsoever: for they all partake of one common essence, and necessarily coincide with each other; and like the drops of rain, which fall separately into the river, mix themselves at once with the stream, and strengthen the general current."—It is indeed a noble and admirable passage.—Porson maintained that women are by nature and of necessity inferior to men; and that whipping is beneficial to youth: on both which points, I to a very considerable degree, differed with him—But we rather declared an opinion, than argued a question. Having drunk about a pint of wine, he refused any more; which determination I was pleased to see. Mentioned the letters to Travis, and the orgies of Bacchus. Quoted Foote (Smirk in the Minor) and spoke of him, as he well deserves, with rapture—Went in the evening to the billiard table, but did not play. I go for exercise, because I find that walking without a motive wearies, not recruits the spirits: but my rule is never to play for more than a shilling, and never to bet, as I hold gaming to be a detestable vice. I am obliged to play for something in compliance with the custom. Returned and read a few pages of Pennant's tour in Scotland, which I began this day.

23*rd.*—Wrote a scene in "Old Clothesman"; walked to see Mr. Godwin; conversed of my disease; he wished me to consult Carlisle—Returned; wrote a letter to Mrs. Jordan, in behalf of Mr. Watts—Conversed with Mr. Webb at Debrett's, on the moral progress of mankind—Returned and saw Mr. Colman, from whom I now first learnt that the prologue and epilogue to the Inquisitor, advertised without my knowledge, and to be played this very night, were written by the prompter, Mr. Waldron—Accompanied Fanny two lessons, and went to billiards, played about a dozen games; felt internal pains that warned me; felt my pulse, and found it extremely quick; left off immediately, applied my thoughts to calm the arterial action, walked gently home; giddy, and considerably affected: took medicine, and went to bed. Soon after received accounts, that the Inquisitor was in part highly disapproved of, and ridiculed. Mr. —— was of opinion that the story, notwithstanding, made a considerable impression upon the audience, which he considered as an impartial one; and that, on the whole, the feelings of the people were more for than against the play. In the course of the day, read more of Pennant; the facts he collects are useful, and some of them curious; but his manner is disjointed, confused, and therefore dull.

24*th.*—Worked about an hour at my opera, [Old Clothesman]—Read Pennant—Went to Colman, who seems fearful I should wish him to play the Inquisitor to his own disadvantage. Agreed to omit certain passages the next night: when he first read the play, his opinion was warmly in its favor, he then thought it perfectly safe. The ludicrous reception it met with from the audience has changed his opinion. I have found the same effect produced on others, on various occasions. My opinion is, that it was not the play which occasioned the laughter, but the manner of performing it, aided by the gratification which the flippancy of criticism finds in flattering its own discrimination and superiority. The play will be printed with the passages retained (except one, which is trifling) that the reader of it may judge how far it was in itself calculated to produce, or to deserve laughter. Our theatres at present, (and from its smallness this theatre in particular) are half filled with prostitutes and their paramours: they disturb the rest of the audience; and the author and common sense, are the sport of their caprice and profligacy. Met Perry for the first time since his release from Newgate; then Dr. Moore, who shewed me the list of the special jury, summoned to try Cuthell, or Johnson, for publishing Wakefield's pamphlet.—Dined, Godwin and R—ce present. Godwin mentioned a Mr. —— whom he and Mr. Fawcett,[1] on a pedestrian ramble, went to visit at Ipswich: Godwin saying, that perhaps he would give them beds; if not, he would ask them to supper, and besides they should have the pleasure of seeing the beautiful Cicely, his daughter. They went, stayed some time, but received no invitation. When they came away, Mr. Fawcett said he had three questions to ask Mr. Godwin—How he liked his supper, how he liked his bed, and how he liked Miss Cicely (who had not appeared)? This occasioned me to remark, that the fault was probably not in the host, but in the hypocrisy of our manners; and that they ought to have freely said they wanted a supper, beds, and to see Miss Cicely. Spoke to Mr. R—ce on the morality of eating animal food: he said we had no right to kill animals, and diminish the quantity of sensation. I answered that the quantity of sensation was greatly increased; for that the number of living animals was increased, perhaps ten, perhaps a hundred fold, by the care which man bestowed on them; and that as I saw no reason to suppose they meditated on, or had any fore-knowledge of death, the pain of dying to them is scarcely worth mentioning. I ought however to have added, that the habit of putting them to death, probably injures that class of men (butchers) whose office it is, and that they communicate the injury in part to society. This evil I think might be greatly remedied. Ritson joined our party in the evening.

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[1] The late Rev. Joseph Fawcett, author of The Art of War, &c. It was he who delivered the Sunday evening lectures at the Old Jewry, which were so popular about twenty years ago. He afterwards retired to Hedgegrove in Hertfordshire. It was here that I first became acquainted with him, and passed some of the pleasantest days of my life. He was the friend of my early youth. He was the first person of literary eminence, whom I had then known; and the conversations I had with him on subjects of taste and philosophy, (for his taste was as refined as his powers of reasoning were profound and subtle) gave me a delight, such as I can never feel again.

The writings of Sterne, Fielding, Cervantes, Richardson, Rousseau, Godwin, Goethe, &c. were the usual subjects of our discourse, and the pleasure I had had, in reading these authors, seemed more than doubled. Of all the persons I have ever known, he was the most perfectly free from every taint of jealousy or narrowness. Never did a mean or sinister motive come near his heart. He was one of the most enthusiastic admirers of the French Revolution; and I believe that the disappointment of the hopes he had cherished of the freedom and happiness of mankind, preyed upon his mind, and hastened his death. EDITOR.

25th.—Took my medicine as usual. Sent orders to Marshall, and others. Read the papers at Debrett's: they were uniform in decrying the Inquisitor. One critic, whom I believe to be a man of taste and candor, accused it of fustian, and various other vile defects.—Went to Tattersall's—the usual group there of horse-dealers, jockeys, and gentlemen: played three games at billiards, in Sharrard-Street—Saw Mr. S——, who thought but indifferently of the Inquisitor; alleging, however, that he could not hear, &c.—Went to Colman at the theatre, the Inquisitor then performing to the satisfaction of the audience; he therefore agreed to play it the next night; but was anxious, if the house was thin, that it should be laid aside. We agreed to wait the event, and confer on Wednesday. Returned. Mr. S——, came to me from the play-house, to inform me, that the piece had on this second performance, been well received; that the actors, who played vilely the first night, were greatly improved, and that his opinion of it was very much changed.

26th.—Went to Paternoster-Row; conferred with Robinson on publishing the Inquisitor. He promised to consider the proposals I had made, concerning the sale of the whole of my copy-rights. Returned and sent the Inquisitor to press. Went to King's sale—bought the bible in Welsh, Polish, Danish and Swedish: likewise Novelle di Salernitano (scarce) and other books. Saw D'Israeli there, and Rogers, the poet, but did not notice the first. Went to Debrett's: numbers there, Lords Townshend, Thanet, &c. Messrs. Francis, St. John, &c. The expedition of Buonaparte, and the news of the defeat of the Irish at Wexford, the chief topics. The Irish, it was supposed, must for the present be quelled. Met Perry, and conversed with him on the Inquisitor; blamed by him for writing too fast. Called at Opie's in the evening; sat near two hours.—Much difference of sentiment between us, but little or no ill humour.

27th.—Read Pennant, and Bower's Life of Pope Alexander the Sixth. The general system of morals at that time in Italy must have been wretchedly depraved; or this pope, and his active, but wicked son, Cæsar Borgia, might have been admirable characters. They seem but to have excelled their contemporaries in wickedness. Saw Parson —— at Debrett's, who described the sandy roads of the north of Germany as invariably heavy and bad. A nobleman, who travelled post, was eighteen days in going to Vienna; a journey of little more than 400 English miles.—Praised the wines of Hungary as the best in the world: those of the common inns in Germany as very bad. I read the three gazettes relative to Irish affairs, the defeat of the Insurgents, the capture of Wexford, the haughty answer of Lake to the terms proposed, and the evacuation of part of St. Domingo by the British troops. Returned to meet Colman, who broke his appointment. Wrote to him. Accompanied Fanny in a lesson after dinner. Mr. Geiseveiler played chess, and drank tea with us.

28th.—Considered my opera, but did not write. Read Middleton's dedication and preface to Life of Cicero; a man of uncommonly sound head and heart. Walked to Debrett's; nothing stirring. Colman came to me. The third night of the play under-charges: promises, if he can, to perform it again with the new farce, that is, if the farce brings money. Played a lesson with Fanny after dinner. Visited Mr. Geiseveiler, and met there Dr. ——, chaplain to the Austrian Embassy, and Mr. ——, an emigrant, native of Brussels. The Doctor had the most literature, but the emigrant the most logic. The Doctor is a chemist, known to Mr. Nicholson, who, the Doctor says, has written the best chemical book in our language, meaning his "First Elements." They both reasoned on the expedition of Buonaparte, and both seemed inclined to think him gone to the East-Indies, either up the Red Sea, and from thence across the Little Desert, and by sea to the Carnatic, or down the Euphrates into the Persian Gulph, &c. Both were convinced, it could be no such trifling object as the capture of Malta, or any Mediterranean Island. The blow, they supposed, was meditated against the whole of the power of England in India. The Doctor thinks with me, that Kant, who is at present so much admired in Germany, is little better than a jargonist. Returned; made some good notes for the character of Morgan [in "The Old Clothesman"], and went to bed; but my imagination being awakened, I could not get to sleep till nearly one o'clock.

29th.—Worked at my opera.—At Debrett's,—Conjectures were made on Buonaparte's expedition, and the difficulties attending it. Weld of opinion that he would cross the Great Desert as the least difficult. The transportation of artillery, ammunition, cavalry, &c. over this tract, supposed by Mr. Godfrey to be impracticable. The march of Alexander was of a very different kind. Walked with the two Parrys, who were stopped by O'Bryan and Maxwell concerning Fenwick's publication. The Bow-Street people, on a late trial, were affirmed to have perjured themselves. Ford was supposed by

O'Bryan to have been exempt from this guilt. It was allowed he had behaved kindly to Arthur, but not uprightly in court. For my own part, I know nothing of these matters.

30*th.*—Went, after breakfast, to Mr. Stodart, but did not go in. Met Opie on my return. Thought myself recovering strength and activity apace. Sent into the city for proofs of the play, which were brought back. Corrected them. Wrote notes for a short preface. Received 17*l.* 16*s.* 10*d.* for my mare, which was knocked down on Wednesday for nineteen guineas at Aldridge's. In the course of this day's business, about two o'clock, leaning the pit of my stomach hastily over the edge of a desk, I was again seized with excruciating pains in my stomach; cold sweats and debility immediately followed, though the fit was, I believe, the least violent of the four, that I have now had. When it was somewhat assuaged, I was under the necessity of writing my short preface, my second note to W., and of correcting more proof sheets.

July 1*st.*—Read Boswell's Life of Johnson: the writer weak, vain, a sycophant, overflowing with worldly cunning: yet, owing to the industry with which he collected his materials, the book abounds in facts, and is amusing.

2*nd.*—Went to Mr. S——, paid him the hundred pound bill on Mr. Harris at six months, and received the balance: all accounts clear between him and me. Worked at my opera. Wrote scene 8 and 9, as far as "Do you hear how lottery tickets sell?" Satisfied at present with my alterations in the character of Morgan. Read the last proof of the Inquisitor. Read Boswell after dinner. Visited by Messrs. Watts and B——, and Mrs. Revely. Music, Mozart and Haydn, till ten, Fanny the principal performer. I retired to rest in some pain, which increased in bed: dreamed that my body was severed above the hips, and again joined in a surprising manner; astonished to think I was alive; afraid of being struck or run against, lest the parts should be dissevered. Very angry at the thoughtlessness of a boy that gave me a blow, and again surprised that it had no ill consequences. This dream appears to be the result of the pain, and the waking thoughts I have had on the probabilities of life or death.

3*rd.*—Wrote to the Rev. G. Smith, under frank given me by Lord Thanet, containing two bank notes, value six pounds, for my father's widow. Worked at my opera a very short time. Informed by Mr. Weld that Dr. Pitcairne had been cured of my complaint. Characterised him as our ablest physician since the death of Warren. Related that the Doctor and Sir George Baker were present in Warren's last moments; that Sir George wished Warren to take an opiate, which he refused. Sir George desired him to give his reasons, and Warren, turning to the Doctor, said, "Tell Baker why I ought not to take an opiate to-day." Immediately after which he clapped his hand to his breast and exclaimed "it is come again," then presently expired. Read the Reviews and Monthly Magazine. In the evening called at Opie's: they not returned from Southgate! Sat with Mr. Nicholson till ten. One game at chess: conversed of my disease; of the present vicious enunciation of thought, and its evils to society: of a universal character which Nicholson is persuaded must soon be invented, and come into general use: he himself inclined to execute the task, which he does not consider as very difficult: of Bramhead at Devonshire-House, and Arkwright: of Tooke, and the misapplication of his powers, the sacrifice of wisdom and virtue to the pitiful triumph of the moment.

4*th*.—Sent in Shepperson and Reynold's account, the balance 24*l*. 4*s*. in my favor. Worked an hour or better at my opera. No news at Debrett's, except Buonaparte said to have taken Malta.

5*th*.—Reading Boswell's Life of Johnson at breakfast, was highly gratified by the following assertion of Johnson: "I find myself under the necessity of observing that this learned and judicious writer (Lord Kaimes), has not accurately distinguished the deficiencies and demands of the different conditions of human life; which, from a degree of savageness and independence, in which all laws are vain, *passes, or may pass*, by innumerable gradations, to a state of reciprocal benignity *in which laws shall be no longer necessary*." Visited C——, profuse in his display of chirurgical knowledge, an acute and thinking mind, disliking contradiction, tenacious of system, and generally systematizing: thought the mind ought not to endeavour to regulate disease, its influence being great, but, as he affirmed, prejudicial. Instanced, that people having wounds, by a close attention to their feelings in the affected part, increased its sensibility to a noxious degree; and that the bones which, he said (I think erroneously,) have themselves no feeling, had, by the attention of patients, fixed upon them when diseased, become entirely sensitive. He spoke of these as facts within his own knowledge. From my own experience I believe them to be true, and think with him, that the attention so fixed upon parts diseased, may be prejudicial; but from experiments made upon myself, if the attention be fixed with a tranquil, pacifying, and cheerful temper of mind, I am persuaded they highly benefit the sufferer. This I urged; but his opinion seemed fixed. Advised me to consult Pitcairne, but did not lead me to hope, either from himself or others, any degree of medical knowledge that should be efficient. What is called nature, that is, the changes that are continually taking place, is trusted to as the chief operator. Received the third volume of Ireland's Hogarth Illustrated. Clementi dined with us.

6th.—Read Hogarth, J. Ireland, vol. 3. Some valuable information, but wretchedly put together. Hogarth too irascible, and pushing his favourite points to extremes: a man of uncommon genius, and though highly admired by some, most unjustly treated by others. If it be true, which I doubt, that he did not excel in the higher parts of his art, *i.e.* in the beautiful and sublime, what he has written, and what he has done, sufficiently prove, it was not want of power, but want of practice. He felt his wrongs too indignantly, and, in resenting them, wanted liberality. Manners are undergoing a great change; and though just at present, an intolerant and acrimonious spirit prevails, yet there is much less ruggedness, asperity, and undisguised insult, than there was in his time. Saw B—— at Debrett's; the health of Porson precarious. Called at Opie's; he gone to see Hogarth's March to Finchley.

7th.—Gillies, B—ll, S——, called before dinner. Worked nearly one hour at the opera; the scene of Frank and Morgan for and against speculation; but as I grew warm with the subject, felt a pain similar to preceding sensations, which warned me to desist.—Read Middleton's Life of Cicero, and the pain went. Reports of the day, that Buonaparte and four or five sail of the line are taken: but disbelieved at Lloyd's: and that the insurgents in Wicklow have surprised and totally cut off the Ancient Britons, a corps hated by the Irish for the mischief done them. Affairs of Boyd and Benfield deranged; both, it is said, from mean beginnings, had attained the utmost splendour of wealth. Boyd had been successively the chief money dealer in France at the commencement of the Revolution; then in England, and for the Emperor: something like the cashier of Europe; compared to Law for enterprise and capacity, and for proving the facility of an impossible scheme. Read Boswell's Life of Johnson after dinner.

8th.—My spirits more cheerful, and my strength increasing. Read Boswell's Life of Johnson; practised a little music. Purcel, a flowing, impassioned composer—his harmonies original, yet natural; and his melodies the best of his day. Is it true, as Boswell affirms, that Corelli came to England to visit him, and that Purcel being dead, Corelli immediately returned? Mr. Foulkes, before dinner, gave me an account of Coigley, as well previous to his trial, as when sentence was passed, and at the place of execution: his sentiments generous, his mind undaunted, and his behaviour heroic. Mr. Godwin's conversation, as usual, was acute, and his ideas comprehensive.

9th.—Read Boswell. Wrote notes for the opera, with song, "Old Clothes to sell," and other alterations and additions to the first exit of Morgan. Dined with Phillips (Monthly Magazine). Present F. the Cambridge man, Signor Damiani, Dr. Geddes, Pinkerton (Heron's Letters), and S—— ; the three last, Scotchmen. S—— rattled, but had read and remembered. Pinkerton said little. The Doctor rather fond of dull stories ; a man of information, irascible, and pertinacious. Maintained that a gentleman who, following the common path through an orchard, plucked apples, put them in his pocket, and left a shilling for them at the house of the owner, committed so heinous an offence, that he might justly have been shot as a robber. He scoffed at the argument and possibility of the apples being more necessary to the happiness of the man who took them, than of the legal owner. The argument is indeed hypothetical, and should be cautiously admitted. He treated the plea of benevolence, in the depredator's behalf, with equal contempt ; and affirmed, he did not argue as a lawyer, but from principles of indubitable justice. I was his chief opponent, and for a moment caught some of his heat and obstinacy. One of his stories was of a Romish priest, who sent up to town to Coghlan, a Catholic bookseller, for three hundred asparagus, which the man mistook for Asperges, an instrument used to sprinkle holy water with. The joke was the bookseller's distress at not being able to procure more than forty or fifty in the time, and promising the rest. I forgot to mention Mr. B——, a teacher, who informed us the wife of Petion remains still persuaded that her husband is not dead, and that he will again appear as soon as he can with safety. I related that Petion, when in England, had once dined with me, that he was so full of his own oratory, as to turn his back to the mantel-piece, as soon as he came in, and make a speech, which lasted till the dinner was on table ; that as soon as eating gave him leave, he again harangued, and would with difficulty suffer himself to be interrupted, till he took his leave ; and that, for my own part, I saw no marks of a man of great abilities, to which B—— assented. George Dyer came in after dinner. Except myself, I have reason to believe, that all the persons at table have been occasional writers for the Monthly Magazine. I walked slowly, and fed cautiously. The foolish question of whether the next century will begin the first of January, 1800, or 1801, was mentioned by F. with as much pleasure as his imagination seems capable of ; for he had been present at two sumptuous dinners, and was likely to enjoy several others. He revelled in the idea of disputes which produced wagers of eating and drinking, said they were very proper, and the more uncertain and confused the better. He, as a mathematician, had been appealed to, and had decided in favour of the year 1800. Geddes remarked, that there were pamphlets which shewed the same question was agitated at the beginning of the last century. To be sure, said F., it always will be a question, and it is fit it should be. Geddes was still more incomprehensible; for if I understood him, the century begins with the year 99. I asked him to explain: he said he could only do it by a diagram; but added, that after Christ was born, the year I was not completed till he was one year old; to which I answered, this I believed nobody would dispute. As I found they either did not understand themselves, or at least were unintelligible to me, I dropped the question.

10*th*.—Left my card for C.—Mr. B. called. Has adopted the cant which from Germany has spread to England, of affirming Mozart to be a greater man than Haydn. In Germany, his theatrical pieces have given Mozart his great popularity: he was undoubtedly a man of uncommon genius, but not a Haydn. His life indeed was too short. Stoddart left his translation of Don Carlos. He has executed his task reputably: the fourth and fifth acts of the play are greatly confused. The first interview of Philip II. and the Marquis of Posa, is a masterly scene. The whole is unequal; in some parts, feeble; in others, tedious: and yet a performance of which none but a man of genius could be capable. It reminds the reader of Hamlet and Othello, and of various passages in Shakespeare.

11*th*.—Read Boswell. Handel returned from the binders. Wrote Act I of the opera, but had some notes. Heard at Debrett's that when Pitt went to the levee, after his illness and duel, the king shook him by the hand, a thing unprecedented, and violating etiquette.

12*th*.—Called on C—. He supposes electricity and the human will to be the same; gave high praise to Count Rumford's experiments on heat. His imagination luxuriant, incautious, and daring. Dalrymple and the most scientific geographers, whom he met at the house of Sir Joseph Banks, are convinced of the practicability of conveying armies to India, by the way of Cairo, Suez, &c. This supposed scheme of the French still continues to be the commonplace gossip of the day. Revised and copied part of Scene 18. Dr. Black said at Debrett's, that Father le Roche was hanged twice, the rope breaking when he was half strangled, and that he cursed and swore violently at being so treated. Met G—— and O—— at Geiseveiller's. G—— characterised Laudohn as a practical rather than theoretical general; and Lacy as the reverse. Said, Laudohn was a severe and despotic disciplinarian; instanced a Colonel, at the attack of Novi, whose regiment was engaged, and he behind. Laudohn coming up, asked him if that was his proper place, and commanded him immediately to hasten and head his regiment. The Colonel obeyed. Laudohn, however, passing the same regiment some time after, again found the Colonel in the rear; and not waiting for any court-martial, or form of trial, shot him through the head. On another occasion, during the war with the Turks, he sent orders to General Clairfait, who commanded a corps about thirty miles distant, to attack the enemy. Clairfait, a man of skill and courage, considered the superior numbers of the enemy, and their strong position, and disobeyed: but immediately dispatched a letter stating his reasons. Laudohn read the letter in presence of the officer who brought it; then tore it, and threw it on the ground. The officer asked with some surprise, what answer he was to take back. Laudohn replied, "You have witnessed my answer." The officer returned, related what had passed, and Clairfait immediately attacked the Turks, whom he routed. Laudohn when not in the field, nor employed in military duties, lived silent, reserved, and penuriously. At the beginning of the Turkish war, Lacy and others were employed; and the Emperor, according to G——, lost the greatest part of an army composed of 200,000 men. Laudohn was at length sent as commander in chief; and the moment he was thus employed, he became cheerful, pleasant, and generous; and in about a year, so frequently triumphed over the Turks, that he compelled them to make peace. During the public rejoicings for one of these victories, at Vienna, his name was emblazoned and repeated in a variety of ways: and the Emperor Joseph II. walking with Marshal Lacy to see the illuminations, said to the Marshal, "My dear Marshal, they don't mention a word of you or me." After the peace of Teschen, Frederick II., Joseph, and the Generals in Chief, dined together; and it was remarked, that whenever Frederick addressed Lacy, or the other Austrian Field Marshals, he never gave them that title, but said Monsieur Lacy, &c.; and when he addressed Laudohn, who had not been honoured with that rank, he always called him Field Marshal Laudohn. The Emperor understood the reproof; and a few weeks afterwards, created him a Field Marshal. These particulars were told by G——. I do not know whether they are common stories; but they agree with the character of Laudohn, and are probably true. When G—— went, I conversed with O—— on Shakspeare, of whom he had no great opinion. Corneille, Racine, Crebillon, and Voltaire, he supposed the most perfect writers of tragedy. He held verse, that is, rhyme, to be essential to the French theatre; and urged the hexameters of Greece and Rome, and English blank verse. He was unwilling to allow it was much more probable, when the tone of passion is raised, for men to speak in hexameters than in rhyme, or in alexandrines. I affirmed, they might still more easily speak in the blank verse of Shakspeare, which in reality is only an harmonious and measured prose. P. at Debrett's, when he had done with Lords and M.P.'s spoke to me. Cornfactors are beginning to speculate on a bad harvest. After dinner, sat half an hour at Opie's. G. Dyer there.

14*th*.—Saw in the newspaper another of Garat's speeches at the court of Naples. Read one yesterday, which, for its pedantry and foppery, was highly ridiculous. Garat compares France to the ancient republics; and says she imitates them in sending out her philosophy and philosophers (himself one) to kings and states, and subjugated lands. There is something extremely offensive in the vapouring of this great nation, or, rather, of the persons who take upon them to govern and be the mouthpiece of the nation, which certainly has the character of grandeur, both of virtue and vice; but which yet has a strange propensity, in certain points of view, to render itself contemptible.

15*th*.—Sir William B——, with his young son, called: he was lately knighted. Speaks best on painting, the subject on which we chiefly conversed: said that a notion prevailed in Italy, that pictures having a brown tone, had most the hue of Titian, and that the picture-dealers of Italy smeared them over with some substance, which communicates this tone; and added, that my Castiglione landscape had been so smeared. Of this I doubt. Repeated a conversation, at which he was present, when Burke endeavoured to persuade Sir Joshua Reynolds to alter his picture of the dying Cardinal, by taking away the devil, which Burke said was an absurd and ridiculous incident, and a disgrace to the artist. Sir Joshua replied, that if Mr. Burke thought proper, he could argue as well *per contra*; and Burke asked if he supposed him so unprincipled as to speak from any thing but conviction? No, said Sir Joshua, but had you happened to take the other side, you could have spoken with equal force. Burke again urged him to obliterate this blemish, saying, Sir Joshua had heard his arguments (which B—— did not repeat), and desired to know if he could answer them. Sir Joshua replied, it was a thought he had conceived and executed to the satisfaction of himself and many others; and having placed the devil there, there he should remain. B—— praised my portrait, painted by Opie; but said the colouring was too foxy; allowed Opie great merit, especially in his picture of crowning Henry VI. at Paris; agreed with me that he had a bold and determined mind, and that he nearest approached the fine colouring of Rembrandt. Spoke in high terms of a picture by Fuseli for Comus, the subject (if I understood him) the entrance of the brothers to the release of the lady: and also of a landscape now painting by Sir F. Bourgeois. Played chess with Mr. Du Val. Conceived three scenes for the opera, and sketched two of them: one was suggested by hearing a man and woman wrangle.

16*th.* — Mr. P—— called, wishes me to read a manuscript tragedy written by himself. Wolcott lodges near him at Hampstead. P—— formerly attacked Steevens in his Heron's Letters, therefore they are not acquainted. Steevens quarrelled with the Hampstead Stage several years ago for not having kept him a place, declared he would not ride in it again, has kept his word, and daily walks to town at seven in the morning, and returns to dinner at three in the afternoon; keeps no company, except that he has an annual miser's dinner, that is, a very sumptuous one. P—— is now forty, reads much at the British Museum, which is four miles, all but a quarter, from his house, and is an hour, all but five minutes, regularly in walking that distance. Nothing at Debrett's. Mr. Godwin returned the first act of the opera with remarks, dictated evidently by the fear, that ill-success will attend me in future, as it has in some late attempts. The strongest minds cannot shake off the influence which the opinion of a multitude produces. Louisa Mercier dined with us. Read Boswell. Still the same loquacious parasite: to whom we are highly indebted for the facts he has preserved relative to Johnson, and I had almost said for the laughter he has excited at himself. He is indeed, a most solemn, pompous, and important coxcomb. I never was in his company, but have frequently seen him in the streets. His grave strut and elevated head, with a peculiar self-important set of his face, entirely corresponded with the character he unintentionally draws of himself in his writings.

17*th.*—Read Boswell. The French at Turin: their thirst of dominion insatiable. It is a duty to calculate what will be the moral consequences of their vicious actions. I am sorry I have not the time (most men have more or less the abilities) for such calculations. Met Mr. Marshal, who did not much like the Inquisitor on the stage. Told me Robinson lamented, in a friendly manner, that I was not more careful of my fame. Perhaps I am mistaken, but though the Inquisitor was certainly no more than a trifling effort, I still do not think it a contemptible one. The audience, Marshal says, were but little attentive to the story. Surely this was the fault of the performers. But the piece is printed, and if I am partial, will detect my folly. The topic at Debrett's was the two Sheares's, who have been executed for treason in Dublin. They were brothers, both in the law, but had little practice, because of their open and passionate declarations against government: were in Paris during some epoch of great conflict, mounted guard, wore the red cap, &c. as many or most other of the English did for their own safety, and are the sons of a wealthy banker, who I hear once was member for the city of Cork. In the course of the day I walked to Mr. Godwin's, King's, Covent Garden, Debrett's, and (after three games of chess in the evening), up Oxford Road and back to the billiard-table with Mr. Geiseveiller, in all nine or ten miles, after which I played sixteen games at billiards. I imagine I confided too much in my strength, and took an excess of exercise, for I awoke between two and three in the morning, after getting to sleep with great difficulty, and found my sensations, or spirits, as they are called, considerably in a flutter, and my pulse very quick. I rose, threw up the window, and walked in the stream of air; a short time after which I again went to bed and slept, but had very vivid dreams; in one of them I was riding a race horse full speed over dangerous and steep places. This and other experiments seem to confirm the opinion of Dr. Parry, that there is an undue action of the arterial system. Sketched a short scene between Frank and Clara, and considered the arrangement of the second act of the opera.

18*th*.—Corrected and transcribed the first scene, and wrote the duet Act 2. Met Brown of Norwich, and promised him a letter of recommendation to Hamburg. Parry, jun. at Debrett's, told him that the Emperor had issued a decree, by which persons having money in the bank of Vienna were required to advance 30 per cent. as a loan, for which the whole, bearing at present four per cent., should be advanced to five; but that persons refusing the further loan of 30 per cent. should receive no interest for the money already in the bank. Went to Hampstead, rode about a mile and a half. Pinkerton pleasant in manner, and apparently not ill-tempered. Professes to avoid metaphysical inquiry — his memory tolerably retentive of historical facts and biographical anecdotes.

19*th*. — Debrett read a philippic by Francis, from his parliamentary debates, against Thurlow, delivered I think in 1784, on the India Bill. It had greater strength and a better style than I supposed Francis capable of. Went for the first time to the fruit-shop next door but one to Debrett's, and eat an ice. A notorious gambler, billiard player, and thief, called the Diamond, after a thousand escapes, has been detected in stealing stockings; is taken, and will probably be transported for life. Should I hereafter find time, some of his pranks, as part of the history of the human mind, might be worth recording. Sastres, an Italian, mentioned by Boswell in his Life of Johnson, was at the fruit shop. I asked him if he knew Boswell. The name excited his indignation; he spoke of Boswell as a proud, pompous, and selfish blockhead, who obtruded himself upon every one, and by his impudent anxiety lost what would otherwise have been willingly granted. As an instance, Johnson did not once mention him in his will, after their pretended intimate and sincere friendship; while S—— himself had that honour. This account did but confirm the internal evidence of Boswell's own book. Notwithstanding Johnson's professions, which were but efforts to be kind to him, I think it impossible he should either feel esteem or affection for such a man. I drank one cup of strong tea, and another half water; to this I attribute a second restless night; I went to sleep with difficulty after twelve, awoke before three, as on the 17th, threw up the window, walked in the air, and went to bed. By an effort I had a doze of a few minutes, but was soon perfectly awake, and went into the library, where I sat undressed, pointing and correcting the opera till about five. I then went to bed and slept till nine, but it was not sound and healthful sleep. Johnson complains in one of his letters, Vol. iii. of Boswell's Life, of having had but one sound night's rest during twenty years. Johnson drank tea to excess. To some persons I have no doubt it is a wholesome beverage, to others I suspect it is highly pernicious.

20th.—Called on Foulkes and Robinson, neither at home. Mr. Armstrong informs me that several persons have been afflicted like myself with hemorrhage, told me that in Ruspini's cases of cures performed by his styptic, was one of a mathematical instrument-maker, of Dean-street, who really had, as Ruspini asserts, a hemorrhage of the nose stopped by the styptic, but who died ten days afterwards in an apoplectic fit. We both conjectured such discharges of blood were frequently beneficial. Read the papers at Debrett's as usual, the same sanguinary measures and modes of revenge mutually practised in Ireland. Played chess and billiards with Geiseveiller: drank no tea, yet had another restless night little better than the last.

21st.—I daily but slowly proceed with my opera. Saw Banks of K. at Debrett's, and M. the ——'s, member in the last parliament, who very characteristically told me, (somebody having sent him the translation of Schiller's Don Carlos) that he accepted every thing which was given him. I looked, and he endeavoured to correct himself, by adding, if it did not exceed the value of an octavo volume. A great gossip with little understanding, and I am almost surprised that a look should excite in him a temporary feeling of his habitual selfishness. Played chess and billiards with Geiseveiller. The marker, a garrulous old Irishman; affirmed that Irish wafers were better than English: the reason he gave was, that after a letter was sealed, you might open it, with an Irish wafer, but not with an English. He pretended to talk philosophy, said there was but one colour, and that the way to prove it was to produce total darkness, and then a brown dog would be white. The sun, he said, regulated the tides, and it is the moon, and not the sun, that is the cause of light. His own absurd manner of explaining his blunders is highly ludicrous.

22nd.—Wrote the chief part of scene 7, act ii. Called on Sir F. B—— to see a landscape he is painting. It is one of his best, the tone is admirable, the composition and execution spirited. After pointing out what I supposed to be its merits, I added, that the head of the cow in the fore-ground was in my opinion too large. The wide open mouth of a dog barking was overcharged: his clouds likewise, I said, were not sufficiently floating, too much in mass, and not tinted as clouds on such a day always are. We conversed of B—— who had made a favourable report to him of the reception I gave him, and of my pictures.

On the subject of standing in the royal presence, Sir F. said that Mr. Kemble seemed to doubt that this was so severely exacted: for when he and Mrs. Siddons were commanded to read a play to the Royal Family, and a splendid circle was assembled to hear them, the Lord Chamberlain came and informed them that they had permission to be seated. But this is a confirmation of the etiquette, and the exception may be accounted for in a variety of ways. He that does not fear to be invidious may begin. Sir F. told me, that in the new edition of Pilkington's Dictionary of Painters, there is a life of Sir Joshua Reynolds, which some attribute to Dr. Wolcott, others, to Opie. Returned, read the life of Johnson. Isaac Read there mentioned as a man superior to all others, in his knowledge of English literature. I have heard Ritson say much the same; if so, it does not make him vain at least. His name, as a commentator on Shakspeare, is added to those of Johnson, Steevens, and Malone; yet I remember one day seeing him walk with seemingly great humility at the tail of the two latter; they attentive to each other, or perhaps, each to himself, and Read wholly overlooked. Boswell likewise prates (for I think the term appropriate) of Dr. Towers, who though a whig, is in his class of good writers. Let the works of Towers testify. As a man, when he is in a society where speeches are to be made, he is pragmatical, verbose, and overflowing with a vapid kind of rage. He too was the tail-piece and butt of the late Dr. Kippis, who, when called a man of moderate talents, is not injured.

23rd. — Read P——'s tragedy. Contains some poetry and passion, presents a picture of the manners of the distant age, in which the scene is laid, superior to any thing I remember to have read: but is occasionally verbose. Has not enough of soul, and is deficient in plot. Is much better, however, than many things which pass current; wrote the Mariners' Glee, and the short scene 8, song excepted. Nothing at Debrett's except Irish affairs, and contradiction of the reports which for some days have been floating, of the capture of Buonaparte, &c. Ate little meat at dinner, took half a pint of milk and bread between six and seven o'clock, which served for tea and supper, and slept soundly. Mr. Birch came, and restored the chilled varnish of the pictures, by damping, then gently rubbing them dry with a cloth, and afterward with flannel.

24th.—Sketched scene 9 of opera. Attended picture-sale in the Haymarket: W. the auctioneer, late a bankrupt, paying eighteenpence in the pound. The best pictures, all or most of them, the property of W——, a picture-dealer, notorious for practising the worst tricks of that tricking trade. He bought his own pictures at high prices, the auctioneer running them up as if he had a room full of bidders, when he had not one: which artifice, I imagine, was for the purpose of asserting to his customers, that each picture fetched such and such a sum, even at an auction. A man ought not to throw away his property, and a picture not fetching its worth, may be honestly bought in; but I do not imagine there was a hope of selling good pictures at this season of the year. No news at Debrett's. Observed the same regimen at dinner and tea, with the same success.

25th.—Went with Geiseveiller to see the picture of the siege of Valenciennes, by Loutherbourg. He went to the scene of action accompanied by Gillray, a Scotchman, famous among the lovers of caricature; a man of talents, however, and uncommonly apt at sketching a hasty likeness. One of the merits of the picture is the portraits it contains, English and Austrian. The Duke of York is the principal figure as the supposed conqueror; and the Austrian General, who actually directed the siege, is placed in a group, where, far from attracting attention, he is but just seen. The picture has great merit,—the difference of costume, English and Austrian, Hulan, &c. is picturesque. The horse drawing a cart in the foreground has that faulty affected energy of the French school, which too often disgraces the works of Loutherbourg. Another picture by the same artist, as a companion to this, is the Victory of Lord Howe on the 1st of June: both were painted at the expense of Mechel, printseller at Basle, and of V. and R. Green, purposely for prints to be engraved from them. For the pictures they paid 500l. each, besides the expenses of Gillray's journeys to Valenciennes, Portsmouth, &c. Saw Mr. E—— at Debrett's, who told me he had it from one of the treasury people, that the present King of Prussia, intending to celebrate his accession by a festival at Berlin, caused preparations to be made, and scaffolding to be raised, on which was a throne with an ascent of steps. This was noticed by the citizens, who gave the K. to understand, the steps were too numerous, and the throne too elevated. They afterwards thought further of the matter, and announced their opinion, that such a festival was unnecessary, on which the hint was taken, the preparations were discontinued, and the money set apart for that purpose, was distributed among the poor. It was observed by ——, the Quidnunc apothecary, that the Government of Spain exhibited tokens of dissolution, he referring to the loan and voluntary contributions at present petitioned for there. I remarked if this argument were true, there was but an ill augury for Austria, with its forced loan of the bank of Vienna. Lord Thanet came in, and was questioned concerning a prosecution which, it is said, government have instituted against him and others, for an attempt to rescue O'Connor in the Court at Maidstone. He answered he heard this prosecution was begun, but had yet received no official notice of it. The coachman of Judge Buller, he said, was knocked down in Court, and ready to swear he, the Earl, was the assailant, though he sat with the counsel, and was never out of the eye of the Judge. The company affirmed Buller's faculties are decayed, (he has had a paralytic stroke.) As a proof, he tells different stories at different times concerning this riot. Another adduced by Thanet is, that, in summing up the evidence, instead of saying the second prisoner, to whom he was referring, he repeatedly said the second witness, till Garrow at length got up in a pet, and called, "You mean the second prisoner, my Lord." M—— and Lady W——, with her boy, were at Debrett's, the only persons when I first went. She talking her usual masculine rhodomontade concerning Fullarton's abuse of the Queen, in his speech on the regency business, which M—— searched for in Debrett's Parliamentary Register, but she could not point out the passage, or at least find the language which she had imputed to him. M——, anxious I should know he was so familiar with a lady of rank, three times repeated her title. I kept my eye on the paper I was reading. Was this malice, or a proper treatment of petty vanity? His being once in Parliament gave him an introduction to various persons whose rank he affects to despise, but whose notice he most spaniel-like courts. A part of his gossip is, always carefully to tell what lord informed him of this, and what baronet or lady made such and such a remark. He appears to live with true Scotch economy, except that he is a great feeder and drinker. He hunts for invitations to dinner. Drank tea with Geiseveiller. G——, F——, and Gessner; F—— a man of very confined intellect; being a Bavarian, he is so prejudiced as to imagine Bavaria superior to other countries in or out of Germany. Three other persons called after tea, two of them English continental traders: the third, a German from Frankfort, who has executed contracts for government, and is come to England to solicit payment, which, after three years petitioning and dunning, he is still unable to obtain. So G—— tells me, who has it, I suppose, from himself.

26th.—Read Boswell. Worked at the opera. Bought books at King's. Went to Debrett's. The news there, that Buonaparte and his whole fleet were taken: it was communicated by Lord H—— to the horse volunteers that were reviewing in Hyde Park; they immediately gave three huzzas, and it ran from mouth to mouth through the crowd. It was false. Such scenes are tragically ridiculous. An officer of note had arrived from Lord St. Vincent; conjecture immediately knew his business: Lords were the first to believe what conjecture affirmed, and men shouted and rejoiced at the imaginary destruction of their fellow beings. Buonaparte has thus been captured at least a dozen times. On one of these occasions Lord L——, as I hear, communicating the news to one of the B——'s, began his letter with three hurrahs.

27th.—Concluded corrections and additions to the second act of the opera. Read the papers at Debrett's. The same sanguinary measures still pursued in Ireland. The prevailing party there seem to contemplate the temporary success of Robespierre, but not his catastrophe. Bought more books at King's. Went with Geiseveiller to see a pretended picture by Correggio, and another by Paul Potter. The latter, I believe, is a true picture; the sky and trees excellent; the composition detestable: a view of some public walk in Holland, with cows and strait-lined railing, like St. James's Park before the alterations. Of Correggio having perhaps never seen a picture, I cannot pretend to judge; but this sketch, for it is no more, produces too feeble an effect to be his, if we may decide from internal evidence. The owner modestly asks nine hundred guineas for it, or ninety-five paid down, and the same sum annually for nine years on good security. The wild expectations that men form to themselves are pitiably ridiculous.

28th.—Reconsidered the two first acts of the opera before proceeding with the third. Nothing at Debrett's. Read the first act of "——" carefully, making pencil marks. Walked to Hampstead; dined with Pinkerton; and after some pleasant literary conversation, relating to the venerable Bede, &c., made my remarks to him on his tragedy. He received them with great candour, but was much more desirous that I should correct than that he should. Requested me to take the tragedy back, and go through the four succeeding acts with the same freedom of criticism used in the first. I have promised to perform the task within three weeks. My sleep remarkably sound after my exercise. P—— told me that when he was at Edinburgh during the American war, the Governor of the Castle received despatches. Lady ——, his friend, in the French sense of the word, was with him, and he was half drunk. Unfit for the task himself, he gave her the despatches to read. The lady has a warm imagination, and is delighted by a grand display; something that she read inflamed her fancy, and she exclaimed, "Governor, here is great news; you must order the castle guns to be fired directly." The Governor took her word for it, and gave orders accordingly: but the great news, like the capture of Buonaparte in Hyde Park on Thursday, was wholly ideal. The guns were fired, the city was alarmed, crowds came running to know the reason, and the maudlin governor was disgraced and laughed at.

29*th*.—Monsieur Julien, the assistant of Colnaghi, the print-seller, came with Geiseveiller to see my pictures. He formerly was an auctioneer in Paris; where he sold some famous collections. He praised quite enough; but the French and Italians think that is what politeness requires. Wrote additional verses to songs in the first act of the opera. Clementi and Geiseveiller to dinner. Conversed on health: I maintaining that exercise and moderate feeding were absolutely necessary for people of and after middle age.

30*th*.—Third act still under consideration. Nothing at Debrett's, but the respite of Bond in Dublin. The papers state Farmer's library to have sold for ——, and his pictures for 500*l*.—King, the auctioneer, informs me the first sum is accurate, but the pictures brought only 50*l*. I saw them. They were select rubbish: unauthenticated portraits by unknown painters. The sale of Farmer's library astonished every body. His rule was not to exceed three shillings for any book; except once, when he paid three and sixpence for a pamphlet, which brought fifteen guineas in the sale. This anecdote I understood to be on the authority of Dr. Gosset, who is the most constant attendant at book sales of any man in England, booksellers not excepted.—Farmer collected all old pamphlets and black letter books, whenever he could pick them up cheap, and these were resold at enormous prices, not for the value of the information they conveyed, but their scarcity. I viewed them as they lay in the auction-room, and books and pictures seemed to be the very refuse of the stalls.

31*st*.—Finished Boswell's Life of Johnson: the author still continuing a pompous egotist, servile, selfish, and cunning; as is evident from the documents and pictures he gives of himself; and defending and condemning, not according to any principles which his own experience and observation had taught, but in conformity to those opinions, whatever they might be, right or wrong, which might most probably ingratiate him with the powerful. As a piece of biography, it is a vile performance; but as a collection of materials, it is a mine. Called on B——. The head of Kemble painted by him for Desenfans is a fine likeness, and a good picture. Saw a pair of his landscapes, but indifferent performances. At one time he copied the old masters. One of these copies after Berghem, but in the style of Wouvermans, is a good imitation, penciled with great labour and exactness, but not with the freedom of an original. The subject, a man on a white Galloway, bird-catching; but the copy was not finished, nor the nets inserted.—Wilson, he says, was indolent, and, in his latter time, used to make several attempts at each touch, before his hand reached the precise place. In this manner a picture would remain several days on the easel, with but little apparent progress. If B—— be accurate, the colours on Wilson's palette did not exceed four, and his common menstruum was linseed oil, instead of other oils eight or ten times as dear. He had much comic humour, would turn from his easel to the window, make whimsical remarks on the passengers, pause to recollect himself, and begin painting again. He was addicted to liquor, by which his nose became enlarged, and so irritable, that the handkerchief was frequently applied to it, and kept in his bosom for that purpose. Glad of every opportunity to escape from labour to his favourite indulgence, he would say to any acquaintance who happened to call, "Come, let us go and take a drop of something. I have painted enough for one day." Farrington and Hodges were his pupils, and many of the pictures that pass for Wilson's were painted by them, but retouched by himself. Thus the same picture became multiplied. He would even buy copies made from his pictures, work upon them and sell them as his own. To a certain degree they were such, but the practice was dishonest; for an unskilful eye could not detect the inferior parts. Arts like these are the ruin of honest and well-earned fame. Wilson, however, was a man of uncommon genius, of which he has left sufficient and undoubted proofs. He and Sir Joshua had conceived some ill-founded prejudices against each other. Under their influence, Sir Joshua once said, at the Academy, Gainsborough was the best English landscape-painter. Wilson, happening to be unperceived at his elbow, replied, "You mean the best English portrait-painter." If it was not Opie, I forget who gave me this anecdote.

August 1st.—Proceed with Middleton's Life of Cicero. It is full of information. Wrote a song to-day, "Dan Cupid, &c." and a glee yesterday, of "Bitter pangs," &c. for the opera. At Debrett's, Mr. Bouverie shewed me the Cambridge paper. Flower, the editor, is a zealot of a bold but honest character. By his paper, he must necessarily have made himself extremely obnoxious to persons in power. He unsparingly assails all whose creed or moral conduct he thinks reproachable. Godwin has been several times attacked in his paper, and probably myself. A letter, written from Ireland by a Colonel in the Guards, asserts, that the two O'Connors, Bond, and another, whose name I have forgotten, have consented to inform against the insurgents, and transport themselves from Ireland, on condition that the life of Bond be spared. Lord Thanet said, he had betted fifty guineas to half a crown, that this was a false assertion. I think myself certain he will win. A. O'Connor is a noble-minded man, or I am wretchedly mistaken, and it is said his brother Roger is even his superior. Met Mr. G——, whom I informed that the comedy of "He 's Much to Blame" was written by me. He testified great satisfaction at the shame its success brought on my persecutors, and that the King, not knowing the author, had commanded it twice. Mentioned its great popularity among the country theatres; invited me to Turnham-Green, and I promised to dine there next Sunday se'nnight.

2nd.—Read Middleton. Wrote a song "The Fiat of Fate," Act 3. Went to Debrett's, read a high-flown complimentary letter, from some city volunteers, to Colonel ——, a bankrupt, persuading him to continue in their command, and describing him as an unfortunate man, but of exemplary worth. A—— remarked that the aristocrats of the corps, had thus stirred in his behalf, because he had gone through thick and thin to serve persons in power. Walked down Constitution-Hill, and wrote Clara's two songs of the third act in the Park. Just as I finished, with my pencil in my hand, I saw I was observed by General F——. We know each other personally, but are not acquainted. Acquaintance indeed among persons of rank, I have very few. My feelings will not suffer me to be forward; and such persons are known only to the obtruding, or those who minister to their immediate pleasures and vices. Men of literature lay claim to honors, to which men of rank have but seldom any good pretensions; and both seem jealous of their individual prerogatives.

3rd.— Wrote Duet, Act 3. Worked at the opera. Asked Weld at Debrett's if he knew Boswell. He had met him at coffee-houses, &c. where B—— used to drink hard and sit late. It was his custom during the sessions, to dine daily with the Judges, invited or not. He obtruded himself every where. Lowe (mentioned by him in his life of Johnson) once gave me a humourous picture of him. Lowe had requested Johnson to write him a letter, which Johnson did, and Boswell came in, while it was writing. His attention was immediately fixed, Lowe took the letter, retired, and was followed by Boswell. "Nothing," said Lowe, "could surprise me more. Till that moment he had so entirely overlooked me, that I did not imagine he knew there was such a creature in existence; and he now accosted me with the most overstrained and insinuating compliments possible." "How do you do, Mr. Lowe? I hope you are very well, Mr. Lowe. Pardon my freedom, Mr. Lowe, but I think I saw my dear friend, Dr. Johnson, writing a letter for you"—"Yes, Sir"—"I hope you will not think me rude, but if it would not be too great a favor, you would infinitely oblige me, if you would just let me have a sight of it. Every thing from that hand, you know, is so inestimable."—"Sir, it is on my own private affairs, but"—"I would not pry into a person's affairs, my dear Mr. Lowe; by any means. I am sure you would not accuse me of such a thing, only if it were no particular secret"—"Sir, you are welcome to read the letter."—"I thank you, my dear Mr. Lowe, you are very obliging, I take it exceedingly kind." (having read) "It is nothing, I believe, Mr. Lowe, that you would be ashamed of"—"Certainly not"—"Why then, my dear Sir, if you would do me another favour, you would make the obligation eternal. If you would but step to Peele's coffee-house with me, and just suffer me to take a copy of it, I would do any thing in my power to oblige you."—"I was overcome," said Lowe, "by this sudden familiarity and condescension, accompanied with bows and grimaces. I had no power to refuse; we went to the coffee-house, my letter was presently transcribed, and as soon as he had put his document in his pocket, Mr. Boswell walked away, as erect and as proud as he was half an hour before, and I ever afterward was unnoticed. Nay, I am not certain," added he, sarcastically, "whether the Scotchman did not leave me, poor as he knew I was, to pay for my own dish of coffee."

4th.—Continued the opera through scene 9, Act 3. Colonel Barry at Debrett's, returned from Ireland: rejoiced to see each other. Spoke of Ireland as subdued by the divisions which government had found the means to create, and chiefly by the aid of the native yeomanry. Read reviews and magazines.

5th.—Corrected scene 10. Wrote song for Florid. Called on N——, who had been sent for by the Duchess of D——; she broke her appointment, made another, and broke that, with a note apologising, and desiring he would come again, and bring a copy of his very excellent journal. This a good deal resembles scenes I had with her in 1783, except that I made application to *her* (for recommendatory letters to our ambassador at Paris) which Mr. N—— did not. Pinkerton, Godwin, Stoddart, and J Parry, to dinner. Stoddart, as usual, acute, but pertinacious and verbose. Godwin clear, and concise.

6th.—Proceeded with the opera. Walked an hour. Returned and finished it. Nothing at Debrett's. Have read Monthly Magazine and Review for some days. Individually, the numbers of such works appear dull: collectively, they afterwards become highly amusing.

7th.—Read and sent the opera to Mr. Harris, with a letter. Walked to Godwin. He proceeds with his novel. Gave a favourable account of Fenwick's pamphlet on Coigley.

8th.—Began to consider my new comedy, which I am very desirous of enriching with numerous incidents.

9th.—Debrett blames Robinson for publishing another translation of the voyage of Perouse; that already published by Johnson, being complete, the size octavo. R.'s edition is to be quarto, the plates in a grander style. Debrett's phrase was, he would burn his fingers. Meditated on the comedy. Conceived two incidents arising from the poverty of my characters, of a pawnbroker's shop, and an antique ring. Dined with Geiseveiller, and G——. His German friends came after dinner. F—— displayed some knowledge in Grammar; but was laughed at by me and G——, for being a disciple of Kant.

10th.—Rose at seven, in good spirits, and apparently excellent health; persuaded, as I had been for some time, that my disease was gone, and my constitution improved. While eating my breakfast, soon after eight, was seized with a fifth fit of hemorrhoidal colic. The pain as on former occasions excruciating, yet resisted with so much determination by me, that I am persuaded its violence was considerably abated. I continued very ill through the day. In the night my dreams were extremely vivid, often disagreeable, but not always. I read and composed poetry, that never had any other existence; engaged in metaphysical disputes; and busied myself with the plot of a comic opera. I conceived a nobleman and his servant, Spaniards, to have arrived at a castle with immense walls and turrets; and that the first thing the nobleman said, must be to tell his servant, that they were now come to the place of action, and must make their way into that castle. The various obstacles and incidents which this would afford, delighted me, while dreaming. A few years ago, having a slight fever, and lying awake in the night, I found I could speak extempore verses on any given subject, (for I proposed two or three to myself) many of them approaching excellence, and the others full of high sounding words, and such as would be thought excellent by some. Fear of increasing the fever, made me rather endeavour to calm and appease my mind, than either to proceed, or try to remember those I had made, which might amount to above thirty lines in number, as I believe. Have found nearly the same facility occasionally, when actually writing poetry, after having considered my subject a certain time, and made a certain number of verses, or rather, after rouzing the faculties. In my sleep I have read many a page of poetry, that never was written. Others have told me they have done the same. Mr. N—— says he has several times gone to bed with his mind wearied by considering a question of science which he could not resolve, has slept or dozed, and the resolution has intruded so forcibly upon his thoughts, that it has awaked him.

11th.—Sent for Dr. Pitcairne. After he was gone, the pain rather increased till I rose, half an hour after, when I experienced some relief. Was induced to examine the nature of pain, and found that it is not, and from the nature of the human frame, cannot be, incessant. Could it be so, it must soon destroy the patient. Sensations are impelled upon us. Trifles, the tickling of a hair, the trains of ideas which pain itself begets, divert the attention. These intervals appear to be short in proportion to the intensity of the pain. Played a game at chess, with Geiseveiller: at the beginning with great brilliancy; at the end, with great stupidity. Received a well written letter from Mrs. B——, and the opera from Harris.

12th.—Harris firmly of opinion the opera will be a good afterpiece, but a dangerous first-piece, I obliged to yield, the slave of my circumstances. He agreed to give me two hundred and fifty pounds for the piece, and the copy-right; and, should it run twenty nights, to make the sum three hundred. Urged me to proceed with my comedy, which I promised, if possible, to send at the close of November. Underwood, a young artist, called to see my pictures. He was full of admiration, but he is a youth. Godwin called to enquire after my health, and Mrs. Foulkes.

13th.—Pitcairne called, behaved very kindly, and refused his fee. I could not visit Mr. G——, who had invited me. The Parrys, Colonel B——, Mrs. F——, and Geiseveiller called. Yesterday and to-day, amidst the pain, I reduced the opera, but not completely.

14th.—Mrs. F—— called: and Geiseveiller before and after seeing the Road to Ruin for the first time at the Haymarket. This perhaps is the only theatre in the three kingdoms, Drury-Lane and the Opera-House excepted, at which it has not been acted more probably fifty times than once. The custom of the theatres prevents its being performed in London, except at Covent-Garden, where it first appeared.

15*th*.—Wrote to Harris and Robinson. Went to Mrs. B——, who requested my advice and aid, concerning a novel. A lively woman, upwards of sixty; widow of Dr. B——. From a printer's mark in the margin, there is reason to suspect her novel has been clandestinely printed. If not, it certainly was in preparation for the press. Completed the reduction of the opera; and proceeded, as the day before, with reading Middleton's Cicero, and correcting P——'s tragedy.

16*th*.—Visited by Dr. Pitcairne, to whom I had sent. Received his fee, is to call on Saturday. Smith, the surgeon, Mrs. F——, Samuel S——, visitors. Read Wild Oats, (having this day received O'Keefe's works) a farce, but one in which much invention and feeling are displayed. Wrote an air to Dan Cupid, in Old Clothesman.

17*th*.—Went to Debrett's, after taking the warm sea-bath. Col. B—— and others praised the Cheltenham waters, as excellent for bilious affections. Walked home, not in the least fatigued.

18*th*.—Visited by Dr. Pitcairne. Corrected tragedy.

19*th*.—Walked into the Park, but overpowered with fatigue and heat, took rest in Whitehall chapel: was too giddy to pay much attention to the paintings of Rubens.

20*th*.—Pitcairne called, thinks I ought to eat meat, refused his fee. Hugh Trevor, and Road to Ruin, sent to Geiseveiller.

21*st*.—Mr. Ramsey, who had acted as a clergyman and physician in the West Indies, returning, was one of the first promoters, by various pamphlets, of the enquiry into the slave-trade. An agent of the planters wrote against him, accusing him of want of humanity in his treatment of the sick slaves. He was advanced in years, and much agitated; the weather was hot, he made a journey, and wrote to contradict the calumny. This brought on an inward hemorrhage, of which he died. Mr. Armstrong gave me the above account; adding, that there scarcely could be a more humane man than Mr. Ramsey. In the present state of my disorder, I am equally afraid of eating and fasting. Debility threatens me on one hand with the loss of power to repel the disease: and not improbably another fit, every mouthful I swallow. Patience and cheerfulness, experience tells me, are my best aids. I am patient, but cannot sufficiently recollect myself, so as to assume that constant cheerfulness which pain so frequently disturbs. This should be a temper of mind inculcated from infancy.

22*nd*.—The perseverance with which I endeavour to notice, and remember my own sensations has occasioned Mr. Armstrong to accuse me of being subject to violent and false alarms. He is mistaken. The consciousness I have of serenity, is too firm and permanent to be a deception; but I am persuaded my cure must depend on a still stricter attention to facts. Dr. Pitcairne came, prescribed, and again refused his fee. Mr. Godwin called, and Captain Johnson, an intelligent Scotch seaman, trading to Bremen and Hamburg; says the Dutch are nearly as good sailors as the English: as a proof, they, like the English, will navigate a small trader with six hands, for which the French would require twelve, and the Spaniards twenty; yet the navigation and work, are best done on board the English and Dutch. Geiseveiller, Mrs. Shield, and T. and B. Mercier, called.

October *3rd.*—I now mean to recommence my diary, which has been interrupted by the disease so often before mentioned, on its coming to a crisis, which was all but mortal.

Went to Debrett's. Met B—— and Parry. Saw Emery and Mrs. Mills in second and third acts of the Road to Ruin. Both have merit. Emery the most. Second illumination night for Nelson's victory. Passed through the mean streets leading to the Seven Dials. The poor did not illuminate. I was in a coach, being too weak to walk.

4th.—Called on Carlisle. Visited P—— and bride; a woman of pleasing manners and intelligent countenance. On return met J. Bannister and Wathen. Dined at Kensington Gore with Mr. and Mrs. B—— and J. Parry.

5th.—Mr. Attwood came by appointment, and received from me the score of "When sharp is the frost, &c." composed by me, but corrected by Mr. Shield for the opera of the Old Clothesman. Sent back the manuscript by him to the theatre. Called on by J. Bannister.

6th.—Six pints of sweet wine given me by J. Bannister.

7th.—Music. Haydn. Fanny accompanied by Messrs. Watts and Mackenzie. Mr. Henry present. Dined at Turnham Green by invitation. Complaint of the G—— family of the want of rational society. The villas of the place having become the country houses of wealthy but ignorant town tradesmen. Butchers, tailors, tallow-chandlers, &c. who make these their holiday and Sunday seats. Message to N—— from G——, inviting communication, as well as to dine, and further intercourse. Whimsical disputes of half-drunken passengers in the coach, on my return, concerning, and descriptive of Nelson's victory. Each man, according to his own account, minutely acquainted with all the occurrences.

8*th.*—Called on N—— to deliver the message from G——. Apothecary at Debrett's affirms there are letters in town of Buonaparte taken with his dispatches; particularly one to his wife, accusing the Directory of having purposely betrayed him into an irretrievable situation of danger. I learnt from Mr. N——'s common-place book that it was on the 11th of March, 1796, that he, Arthur O'Connor, Dr. Parr, (Bellendenus) Godwin, Mackintosh, Opie, Powel (a young Oxonian brought by Parr), and Col. B——, dined with me. I consider the meeting of so many celebrated as well as extraordinary men, as an occurrence worthy of being remembered.

9*th.*—Met Weld at Debrett's, who congratulated me on my recovery in a very friendly manner. Drank tea and sat part of the evening with Mr. and Mrs. Kemble (the father and mother of Mrs. Siddons.) She, except her usual complaints of rheumatism, cheerful and conversable. We talked of Hereford, Ludlow, Worcester races, Leominster, Bewdley, Bromsgrove, Droitwich and Worcester again, as places I had played in while in the Kemble company.

10*th.*—Read the papers at Debrett's. Weld asked Parson —— where Buonaparte is at present? In India, past all doubt, was his answer. I remarked that the parson had always been a fast, but fanciful traveller.

11*th.*—The day rainy; played five games at billiards before dinner. Went in the evening to see "Lovers' Vows" played for the first time at Covent Garden. Translated from the German by some retainer at court, as Mrs. Inchbald told Mr. Robinson, but corrected and altered by her. My legs so swelled that I could only stay the first four acts; which at times made me laugh, and cry heartily. Saw the Parrys at the theatre. James, as usual, fastidious and dissatisfied.

12*th.*—John Parry at Debrett's, praised the whole play, including the fifth act, of last night. B——, the miniature painter, with Bannister, called: B—— saw my pictures, which he praised very much. Sold Bannister the copy of Wilson for five guineas. Finished translating the first act of Kotzebue's Indian in England, which has employed me five or six days; and as I intend essentially to alter the character of Samuel or Balaam, more time will be employed in the revisal. This character has *keeping* in the original but not enough of the *vis comica.*

13*th.*—Walked to Brompton to return Mr. S——'s call. Not at home. Back on foot to Debrett's: obliged to rest several times.

14*th.*—Gave young Watts the letters of recommendation for the opera band, to P—— and Salomon. Picture-dealer's son, near

Stratford-Place, brought a little oval Wilson, bought of him by Bannister, to shew me. The water enchantingly transparent, the sky scarcely less excellent, the composition in itself trifling, but most happily contrived to produce contrast. Bannister came soon after with another Wilson, which I think doubtful, yet a charming picture if a copy. I mean as far as respects the right hand part, the sky, and the distances. The figure seated is an admirable thought, and no less admirably managed. The massy dark wood (said to be Hornsey wood), appeared too lifeless for Wilson; and a person who called afterwards with Mr. Heath (I believe Corbould) said he knew the original, of which this was a copy. The price of the two, the picture-dealer told me, was fifteen pounds. Called with Bannister on Wathen, and afterwards on J. Aickin, who is determined to resign. Forebodings of bankruptcy, such trifles as wood and canvass not to be had; yet three thousand guineas lately given for an estate. Cumberland sent his Tiberius, which had been repeatedly refused, as a new play, to the theatre. It was cheerfully received till the title was read, and then immediately returned. A letter from C—— to Aickin, stated that it was a mistake to suppose it the same Tiberius; it was no longer a tragedy; and if magic, music, scenery, and dialogue, could interest an audience, he had greater expectations from this, than from any piece he had ever produced. It was the most laboured, the oftenest revised, and the best written, of all his works. The letter concluded with an appeal to posterity. B—— and K—— were invited to spend a week at the country house of C——. B—— acknowledged he was partial to a good supper, and K—— the same. Of this article C—— was sparing. I suppose, gentlemen, said he, you are no supper-eaters, a little bread and cheese and small beer is all you take. Their false modesty and contrary wishes made them feel awkward and look silly, but they confirmed him in his supposition. When supper time came, the bread and cheese and small beer appeared. They flattered themselves, however, that a bottle of wine would be the successor. They were deceived: not a drop of wine was brought. Two or three nights made them weary of this; and on one day, they announced their intention of departing the next. If so, gentlemen, said the host, I mean to give you a treat this evening before you leave me; and such a treat! But I do not wish to anticipate. This put them in high spirits; they imagined a couple of fowls, with good old port or madeira, would be served up; and they had highly whetted their fancies with this supposition. The evening came, and with it the treat. C—— approached with a "now, gentlemen, you shall have it; you will find whether I keep my word. Here it is. I suppose you have heard of it? Tiberius, I can assure you the best of all my works." So saying, he spread his manuscript, and began to read. K—— without ceremony, fell asleep in the first act. B—— with great difficulty listened through the second, when the author luckily became tired of his task, either from the labour of reading, or the drowsiness of his auditors.

15*th.*—Walked out before noon, intending to proceed half way to Hammersmith, and then take coach; but finding I had not motive enough to overcome my weakness, turned back and went to the billiard table, where I played an hour and a half. Such is the efficacy of having a motive.

16*th.* — Nobody at Debrett's. Finished translating the second act of the Indians. Mr. Carlisle called. I not at home.

17*th.* — Called on Carlisle. Saw a picture of fish well painted, but praised by him extravagantly.

18*th.* — Walked to Debrett's and King's auction room. Saw Sturt, M.P. and Parry, jun. Mr. P—— called in the forenoon. Praised the passion and power of language with which my tragedy, he says, is written.

19*th.*—Finished translating the Indians. Called on Opie; saw his view of St. Michael's mount, a moon-light, the manner hard, but the scenery and effects grand, and the composition good. A well painted portrait likewise of Dr. A——. Went to Birch, saw a Berghem, as he said, but which I doubt; a good picture. Walked from thence with Bannister, to Simpson's (picture cleaner). Saw the famous Niobe landscape by Wilson, and another by him, lately bought of Sir William Beechy, which Sir William told me was, according to Farrington's account, partly the work of Wilson, and partly of Farrington. Simpson angrily asserts Farrington never touched the picture, and asks fifty guineas for it.

20*th.* — Called on Sir Francis Bourgeois, saw the additional pictures of Desenfans. He, as usual, spoke highly in praise of Kemble. Weld very civil at Debrett's. Billiards in the evening. Compton, auctioneer, Moore, the attorney, another person, and Palmer, jun. author of the epilogue to "Lovers' Vows" came in. All extremely civil to me. When I returned home, found Salomon, who accompanied Fanny with his usual feeling and enthusiasm. Spoke in raptures of Haydn, which well accorded with my own sentiments. Staid till one o'clock, and occasioned me to eat too much supper. Promised to favour Watts, if in his power. Is desirous of setting an English opera.

21*st.*—Called on young Watts concerning the opera engagement. Saw Da Vinci's battle of the Standard by Edelinck; a proof at Edmonds's, upholsterer, cost him two guineas; cheap, I believe, at five. Saw Mrs. Shield. After dinner, was above an hour walking with Fanny to the top of Oxford-Street and back.

22nd.—Wrote to Shield. Read the papers. Letter from Dr. Parry, advising me against the Bath waters. Dined with Robinson. Thursday, Robinson and myself are to exchange acquittances.

23rd.—Called on Aickin. Debts accumulating, business neglected, promises never kept. Hammersley's receiving clerk in the treasury, the whole in a state of disorder, yet the houses great. The Walkers, of Manchester, ruined by the war and ministerial persecutions. Francis and T—— at Debrett's. The latter, as usual, sanguine in describing the progress of Buonaparte, whom he conveys to India with great facility, asserting, Egypt and the revolutionizing of crocodiles, were not the objects of Buonaparte.

24th. — Returned Mr. Boaden's call, and there saw a female portrait, said to be by Leonardo da Vinci, but I think not, though an excellent old picture. Met Banks, Weld, and Bosville, at Debrett's.

25th. — Called on Mr. Compton, who advises no sale of effects till the spring. Proceed daily, but slowly, in correcting the Indians. Papers at Debrett's. Robinson did not keep his appointment.

26th. — Compton, auctioneer, called and looked at books and pictures. Debrett's. Wrote to Mr. P——. His wife ill.

27th.—Clementi called, but Fanny was out. Mr. M—— called. He attends the Old Bailey bar, from a desire to save the lives of the culprits. Talked a little metaphysics. I read Pope's character of Atticus to him.

28th.—Called on ——, and conversed with Mr. Buller on occult and final causes. Saw Tobin's brother. Two girls of the town, walking in Newman Street, praised the goodness of God; and, as the weather had been very rainy for some days, they hoped his goodness would extend itself to render it fair all the next week, that they might walk the streets in comfort. A man being tried for a capital offence at the Old Bailey; the jury retired to consider of their verdict. The three principal witnesses had been ordered out of court, after having given their testimony, but stood in the passage at the door. The reward for convicting the man, as usual, was forty pounds. The jury returned, and pronounced the fatal sentence, Guilty. As soon as the sound reached these witnesses, they jumped up, clapped their hands, and exclaimed to each other, Guilty! Guilty! M—— was in court and witnessed the transaction.

29th.—F——, jun. came to ask me to petition the proprietors of Drury-Lane Theatre for a dresser's place, for the wife of a doorkeeper, who had died suddenly, in the exercise of his office. I could not comply, because of the very improper conduct of these proprietors in refusing to notice the letters I wrote to them, when they ceased, without any apparent cause, to play "Knave or Not?" But I agreed to write a letter for the woman to copy in her own name.

30*th*.—Wrote the letter; F—— having appointed to come for that purpose at nine, was with me at ten. Young S——, and B——'s nephew, came in their father's name to ask for orders. Both families are rich, but I complied and procured them. B—— and N——, M.P. being at Brighton, where Major R—— was, N—— praised the Major as a man of great information, his friend, and one with whom B—— ought to be intimate. B—— said, they had met and spoken, and as there could be no great harm, he would accompany N—— to visit R——. They happened to meet him, and R—— presently took occasion to tell N——, that, from the principles he professed, and the speeches he had made in parliament, he could not but consider him as an enemy to his king and country, he therefore desired they might have no more intercourse. B—— laughed at N—— and his friend, but remarked the Major was an honest man, for most people would have said as much when he was absent, without the courage to declare such sentiments to his face. Hare, St. John, and others, at Debrett's.

31*st*.—P—— and I had a dispute concerning Shakspeare. He asserted, quoting Gray and Warton as his supporters, that the thing in which Shakspeare excels all other writers, and in that only, is sudden bursts of passion. I allowed he did excel other writers in this, as in almost every other part of composition, but that he excelled them most in the full flow of passion. I doubt I was abrupt and dogmatical, for he appears to be a good-natured man; yet I could see he went away displeased.

NOVEMBER 1*st*.—Met Weld and H—— at Debrett's. Pitt met H—— on horseback, the day on which it was determined to strike Fox's name out of the list of privy-counsellors, and made such strange faces at him, that H—— went to Brookes's and reported him mad; on which a person present said, "that accounts for a strange speech, as I thought, of Grenville, who affirmed, that while Pitt was in his present temper, he would not see him, but in the presence of a third person." The —— said to be of the Orange party, and inimical to Cornwallis. Weld affirms, that since London was a city, it never had such immense exports as at this moment.

2*nd*.—Wrote yesterday an apology to P——, for my warmth in dispute; and received a very friendly and proper answer to-day.

4*th*.—Music at Mr. Mackenzie's. Haydn's symphony quintetto and Mozart: both men of uncommon genius, but the latter impatient after novelty and superior excellence, often forgets the flow of passion in laboriously hunting after new thoughts which, when thus introduced, have the same effect in music, as the *concetti* of the Italians have in poetry; and for these Mozart is frequently extolled as superior to Haydn.

6th.—Went and settled with Mr. Robinson, that is, I made over to him the copies and copyright of "School for Arrogance," "Deserted Daughter," "Man of Ten Thousand," "Knave or Not," "Hugh Trevor," and "Anna St. Ives," in consideration of an acquittal of sums due to him, to the amount of 340*l.*, and a conditional promissory note on his part to pay me 150*l.* more, when the copies and copy-right shall have realized to him the sum of 504*l.* Procured a copy of the "School for Ingratitude," advertised by Bell gratis, that is, at the author's expense; he being angry, or rather, enraged at the plagiarism which he (falsely and ridiculously) accuses Messrs. Sheridan and Richardson of committing, by communicating his manuscript to Mr. Reynolds to aid him in writing the comedy of "Cheap Living."

7th.—Called on Carlisle. Conversed on the necessity of cultivating youthful sports and habits in mature and advanced age. Bought books at King's. Met Harris, the manager, and soon after, Tierney, M.P.; both congratulated me on my recovery.

8th.—Read Walpole's Painters.—Looked over and considered the scenes of my new comedy, of which I have sketched about six. Papers at Debrett's; picture sale in Cloak-Lane. A walk altogether of about seven miles. Copies and rubbish at the sale. Sent Robinson an advertisement of my works, with an order to Symonds to deliver the Narrative, and Windham's letter.

11th.—Called on, and conversed with Geiseveiller concerning his new enterprise. Saw a proof of Duncan's Victory, by Fittler, which I think but indifferent. Went to, and conversed with, Aickin on the subject of the Exiles. Kelly very desirous of having something of mine to set. Aickin informed me that Tobin has written two dramatic pieces.

12th.—Wrote to T——. Read the papers.

14th.—Wrote two songs for the "Exiles," the second of Balaam, and the first of Harry. Dined on Monday with P——; Platonist Taylor, and D—— present. Taylor, intolerant and abusive to all who do not pretend to understand and put faith in his Platonic jargon. Had he the power, according to P——, he would bring every man of us to the stake. From my own experience, P——'s description is scarcely exaggerated; but though a bigot, Taylor is an honest one. D——, on the contrary, asked P—— whether he had any principles? and when P—— expressed his surprise at such a question, D—— declared he had none. Saw Dr. Towers at Debrett's; his democracy still maintains its violence; I should scarcely exceed if I said its virulence. He asked me if the universal defection had not made me turn aristocrat. I answered, that I supposed my principles to be founded in truth, that is, in experience and fact: that I continued to believe in the perfectibility of man, which the blunders and passions of ignorance might apparently delay, but could not prevent; and that the only change of opinion I had undergone was, that political revolutions are not so well calculated to better man's condition, as during a certain period I, with almost all the thinking men in Europe, had been led to suppose. The Doctor doubted man's perfectibility; was more inclined to think him a radical sinner; and said, as I held such opinions, I was, no doubt, a Necessarian, to which I readily assented. I do not know what connexion the Doctor found between perfectibility and necessity; though such connexion does certainly exist. Among other things I said, the best of us at present understood morality very imperfectly: his sanctity took offence at the assertion, and he replied, that some of us (meaning, no doubt, himself, and, perhaps, others who hold his tenets) understood it in full perfection, at which I could only smile and dissent.

15*th.*—Saw pictures on show at Christie's, a wretched collection. Met H—— in the room to-day, and M—— yesterday; though both excel as engravers, their remarks shewed they had but little judgment of pictures; a circumstance I have had frequent occasion to observe in engravers, and indeed in painters, though not perhaps so generally. 'Tis seldom that a tolerable painter is not a good judge of the mechanical defects or excellences of a picture. Read at Debrett's, in the papers, the manly behaviour of Tone, tried at Dublin, and cast for high-treason. Johnson the bookseller sent to the King's Bench Prison for selling Wakefield's pamphlet.

16*th.*—Read the first act and part of the second of the Indian Exiles, to Bannister; and am convinced, by the effect it produced upon him, that it is much too dull for representation. I doubt how far it is worth the trouble of alteration. Met Sir F—— B——, lately come to town, at Debrett's. He was very kind. Went to the picture-sale at Christie's. The stable-yards, asses, and pigs of Morland, as usual, fetched a good price.

17*th.*—M——l called, and, speaking on that subject, expressed his sorrow and surprise that W—— should be acquainted with M——, whom M——l, like most other people, considers as a very odd character. I mentioned what I conceived to be artifice in the conduct of W—— as a public preacher. M——l defended him against the charge, and gave me the following information. The famous Dr. Franklin, the present Sir J—— B——, Dr. Solander, Bentley, the partner of Wedgwood, and perhaps some few others, were desirous of putting a plan, conceived by Franklin, into practice; which was, to have a kind of chapel, or meeting-house, where all matters of faith should be omitted, and pure morality taught. W——, at that time a dissenting teacher from Wales, was fixed on as the preacher at this new chapel, but at this period, Franklin was obliged to conceal himself from Government on American affairs, and remained some days shut up in the house of W——, who at that time was a teacher of youth. The scheme, however, did not drop. A small chapel in Margaret-Street, Cavendish-Square, was hired to these moralists at one part of the Sunday, and to Methodists on the other. B—— and Solander acted with great shyness, if not hypocrisy, and instead of countenancing W——, and promoting the plan, they now and then peeped into the chapel, and got away as fast as they decently could. Bentley and M——, the Member for T——, were more open in their conduct, but Bentley and W—— disagreed, because Bentley urged him to insist on the immortality of the soul, and W—— replied he could and would teach no other doctrines than such as agreed with the original plan. M——l attributed the failure of the plan to this defection of B——, Solander, and Bentley, but here I think he is mistaken. I attended this chapel myself, and became acquainted with W——, whose manner was much too dry and cold, and his reasoning too confused either to warm the passions, or sufficiently interest the understanding. He afterwards saw me at the Sunday evening society, where discussion and the reading of philosophical papers were the business of the meetings; at these I read some papers, and my manner was so far animated, as to induce W—— to propose to me that he and I should resume the plan of the chapel, and be joint preachers, which I positively declined. Since this time, we have met and spoke in the streets, but nothing more.

18*th*.—Walked to Hampstead and dined with P——. He asked explanation of various of the corrections I advised and had made with pencil-marks in his tragedy. I had only gone through the four first acts, and he requested I would revise the fifth. Speaking of Dr. G—— he said, that in 1792, it was his custom to declaim vehemently at the Stratford coffee-house, in favour of republicanism; and finding the alarm that was raised, and the tide turning, he soon after wrote in praise of the King, of mixed monarchy, and of the peculiar happiness derived from it by the English. The doctor had been tutor to Lord H——, for which an annuity was settled on him of a hundred a year.

About the time of his turning royalist, Dr. —— died, and the place of ———, becoming vacant, G—— went to Lord H——, who was intimate with Dundas; and proposed, if his lordship would procure him this place, he would resign the annuity. The proposal was accepted, the place procured, and the doctor's loyalty and royalty confirmed. Speaking of his literary talents, P—— joined with me in thinking them rather below than above mediocrity. We differed in opinion concerning the perfectibility of man, against which he quoted the traditional and written authority of five thousand years, treating the supposition with great contempt, and some degree of humourous ridicule. According to him, men grow more corrupt so rapidly, that in his youthful dealings with booksellers, &c., he met with nothing but open fairness, and at present he is obliged to be continually on his guard against cheating and chicanery. I could only answer, that for my own part, I found no such general depravity to combat; and that granting it were so, this was a narrow ground, belonging to temporary and local incident, by which the great question could not be decided.

20*th*.—Called on Sir Francis Burdett, who had just been reading in the newspaper the King's intended speech to-day, (which for some sessions past has been published the morning before it is spoken) and eagerly asked my opinion what he, as an honest member of Parliament, ought to say, thinking it highly objectionable. I read it over, and pointed out parts which I consider, some as vicious in principle, others false in fact. He repeated the summary or skeleton of what he intended to say, part of which was sound sense, and part a repetition of questions a thousand times ineffectually asked. During the day, sketched the beginning scene of Hobson and Dobson.

21*st*.—Worked at my comedy. Fairfax and Curtail, Headlong and the tradesmen, &c. Several politicians at Debrett's, canvassing the King's speech, &c.

22*nd*.—Met a political parson at Debrett's, whose first recollection was where he was to dine. Said that Brown, the Egyptian traveller, affirmed Buonaparte is safe in Egypt, and that Egypt was alone the grand object of the expedition. Received a friendly letter from Dr. Parry.

23*rd*. — Sketched in part the scenes of Melford and Caroline, Caroline and Fairfax, and Caroline and the wife of Norman. Think of rejecting the idea of twin-sisters. A wicked recruiting hand-bill of Ireland, published in to-day's Chronicle. Spoke of it to General Hastings and others. It excited universal abhorrence.

24*th*.—Walked to S——'s, Paternoster-row, for the account between us, which he sent in the evening, wishing me to deduct seventy-six of the Narrative, and twelve of the Letter to Windham, which he pretends to have been lost by the binder, and this since the last settling, during which period the account states only three sold. Saw two or three good pictures at Nodin's, Leadenhall-street. Met Osmond, whom I had not seen for some years. He remarked, I was much altered and broken. He was the same to me. Time effects these changes, especially, as in my case, with the addition of illness, in despite of the little wisdom we at present possess. Conversed with Ward, the pugilist; a man who has been remarkable for uncommon agility, as well as strength and courage; his language illiterate, his countenance and manner vulgar, yet to a certain degree pleasing, and his intellect remarkably quick. He was once so famous at fives, that be beat every opponent, with right, left, or back hand, by his extreme activity. He is now among the best players at billiards. The method practised by pugilists, to bring themselves into condition, as they term it, is air and exercise, regular hours, not more than a pint of wine a-day, lean meat, especially beef, and fowls, with few vegetables. This regimen may be instructive to persons wishing to recover activity and strength. Met Jew K——, who from his conversation and physiognomy, does not appear to grow more wise and placable, as he grows older. Again invited me to renew my visits, which I do not intend, and spoke of the frequency of those of G——, as I suspect, with exaggeration. Soon afterwards, I was in some danger of being run over by B—— D——, his son-in-law, driving a kept woman furiously in a curricle. The coincidence of these rencontres was whimsical.

25*th.*—Called on Stoddart, not at home. Received a letter from him complaining of marked disrespect from me. Answered by truly denying any such intentional behaviour. Godwin, Carlisle, and the two Tobins to dinner, Stoddart came in the evening. Carlisle spoke of a woman who had been five-and-twenty years in bed, from a cancerous disease, and who is still living.

26*th.* — Saw J. Robinson, Sir Francis Burdett, and Este, at Debrett's. It is said, in a newspaper, that Kotzebue is imprisoned by the Imperial Government, for his democratic principles. Mr. Aspin, who printed Fenwick's pamphlet on Coigley, called.

27*th.*—T. North, Lord Thanet, &c. at Debrett's. The ravages of the yellow fever at Philadelphia and New York, detailed in to-day's Chronicle. Courtney says, he lately read in one of Dr. Franklin's letters, a passage where the doctor foretold epidemical diseases, if draining and cleanliness were not more carefully practised.

28*th.* — Called to settle with S——, reminded him that the preface I wrote, and the proofs I read for him, while a prisoner with him in Newgate, had I charged them, if charged at twelve guineas, would not have been more than a third of the value of my time, yet I had charged nothing, nor should, unless he contested a fair account. This induced him immediately to allow the balance due on the sale of my books. Papers at Debrett's. On Thursday the 22nd, Fanny met the Miss Harts, drinking tea with Miss Banks; they are the daughters of Horne Tooke. Horne Tooke takes some pleasure in praising his daughters, which he sometimes does by those equivocatory falsehoods, which are one of his principal pleasures. Of the eldest, he says, "all the beer brewed in this house is of that young lady's brewing." It would be equally true were he to say, all the hogs killed in this house are of that young lady's killing, for they brew no beer. When a member of the Constitutional Society, I have frequently heard him utter sentences, the first part of which would have subjected him to death, by the law, but for the salvo that followed; and the more violent they were, thus contrasted and equivocatory, the greater was his delight.

30*th*.—P—— to dinner. Manuscript letters of James I., Prince Henry, &c. in the Museum. P—— had been reading them, says the character in which they are written, is uncommonly beautiful; and that many of them addressed to Prince Henry, were from projectors and improvers with which that time abounded. Henry delighted in patronizing and encouraging them. P—— of opinion that the high character given of Henry, was well deserved.

December 5*th*.—Saw Cumberland's Word for Nature first time, was much pleased. He too often unravels his whole fable, which is slight enough, in the first or second acts. In this, some little suspense is preserved, and very much of those generous feelings, which interest while they improve. His usual self-conceit was exceedingly prominent in the prologue, and sufficiently so in the play. The epilogue was an incongruous farrago, and took away much of the pleasant feeling the piece had left. It likewise was egotistical. In the dialogue, he was guilty of his common fault, a repeated play upon words, little better than quibbling; and though not held in so much contempt, inferior perhaps to punning, of which it is but a meagre species. His characters of the termagant wife, hen-pecked husband, and old officer, are repetitions of himself: that is, of Ironsides, with Sir Benjamin and Lady Dove, in the Brothers; except that in the Brothers, if I remember rightly, the three characters are much better drawn. The chief, and almost the sole merit of the present comedy centers in the youth Leonard, to whom all the rest are very properly made subservient adjuncts. In this comedy, as in the Wheel of Fortune, there are some few impertinent excrescences. These two pieces, however, have more of wholeness and simplicity in the fable, than most others in the English language, of those at least that, because of their insipidity, are not forgotten. These are the thoughts that occur after having once seen the comedy. Perhaps when I read and consider it more attentively, I may correct or alter my opinion. It was received.

6th.—The papers to-day have been less favourable in the account given of Cumberland's comedy, than I supposed they would have been.

7th.—Coming from Debrett's, I met S——, who likewise spoke unfavourably of Cumberland's comedy.

8th.—Call from Mrs. ——. She was much affected at being told by a tailor, who works for Mr. ——, that my amanuensis had reported my opinion of Mr. —— to be, that he was not a man of principle. I replied, that if I had ever conveyed a thought to my amanuensis which might be so interpreted, it was, when dictating this diary, the contents of which I supposed he would have regarded as sacred, and not have repeated to the disturbance of any person named in it. I added, that the diary was intended as a memorandum of my present conduct, opinions, and intercourse, and to serve in future, as a depository of facts, which both I and others might wish should be preserved. Many of them must doubtless be trifling, others may turn to use, and that this end is desirable in our most insignificant actions. I told her that if by the word unprincipled, any planned intention to defraud was understood, I never had expressed such an opinion of Mr. ——, because I had no such opinion; though his conduct was reprehensible, yet I was satisfied his intentions were honest and kind. The assessed taxes the chief subject of conversation now at Debrett's. There was yesterday in the Chronicle, what was called "a scale," stating, as is the case, according to the proposed bill, that a man of five-hundred a year landed property, which will sell for (say) twenty thousand pounds, during his life, or leave five-hundred a year to his descendants, is to pay fifty pounds per annum assessment. That a man of five-hundred a year annuity, which will sell for only a small part of that sum, and, if not sold, leave nothing to descendants, must pay the same. And lastly, that a man making five-hundred a year by his profession, which during life, will sell for nothing, and leave nothing at his death, must still pay fifty pounds annual assessment. Went with Fanny and Mrs. and Miss B—— to Covent-Garden, to a new comedy performed there, written by Reynolds, called "Laugh when you Can." A strange mixture it would be to compare it, as a whole, with Cumberland's, yet it has sallies of humour, which Cumberland cannot reach, and will probably have a temporary popularity.

9th.—Called on C—— who shewed me a plan for a new school of anatomy.

11th.—Saw P—— at Debrett's, told him my intention to go abroad.

12th. — Mr. H—— at Debrett's remarked that Canning's fine speech in the House of Commons, was rather a reply to what Canning supposed Tierney would have said, than to what Tierney did say.

13th. — At Debrett's, Weld rallied Tarleton on his approaching marriage, and military appointment. Spoke with me concerning Sheridan's opera. T——r having quarrelled with S——, swore he would never be friends again; for he never pulled off his hat to him in the street, but it cost him fifty pounds, and if he trusted himself in the same room, a hundred. S—— still supposed to be concerned in the Haymarket. At Opie's in the evening. Northcote present. Northcote animated, as usual. Related a comic conversation between himself and a framemaker, who had never heard the name of Northcote, nor noticed it in the prints he had framed, though he remembered the names of Sir Joshua Reynolds, West, Opie, &c. After supper, stories of terror were related.

One, of a lady waked from sleep, who suffered her lap-dog to lie at the foot of her bed, and feeling something move, bid the dog lie still, at the same time stretching out her arm, to feel him; but instead of a lap-dog, took hold of a hand. When a voice bid her lie still, make no noise, but deliver her keys. The lady was a woman of courage, and immediately complied, only requesting her daughter might not be disturbed, who was sleeping by her side. She however was mistaken, the daughter had heard the thieves, had risen, slipped on a night-dress, and stealing into another room, gave the alarm, by which the thieves were secured.

Another of a bigotted old lady, who seeing thieves enter her apartment with lights, at midnight, exclaimed to her maid who lay in the same room, "Lie still Betty, for now we shall see the salvation of the Lord!" imagining it was a celestial apparition. The thieves however, were driven away by the fury of a poor man, maintained out of charity, who was half an idiot; and who, after the exploit, was made drunk every day, when he went to Plymouth, with drams given him by people, who bribed him to tell the story.

A third, of a gentleman, that having put out his candle, going to bed, read in blazing characters on his curtains, "Confess thy sins, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." On which the gentleman fell on his knees, and, as directed, began to confess his sins aloud: not from terror, but aware it was a trick, meant to terrify him, by a waggish young lady; and hearing a little bustle on the stairhead, truly supposed that she, and others, were there listening. He confessed as the last and greatest of his sins, that he had seduced the young lady; and, if that might be pardoned him, he would never again be so heinously guilty. The joke was understood, and of course, the lady laughed at, instead of the gentleman.

A fourth, of a cook-maid left alone in a country-house, which was attacked by several thieves on the night when she was sitting up, waiting the arrival of the family. The detail of this story ——, who told it, did not know, except that the fears and courage of the girl being inflamed, finding them to be thieves, and that they were making their way, by widening the aperture of the kitchen gutter, she took up a cleaver, and killed the first man that was creeping forward, then dragged the body away, imitated his voice, encouraged a second to come in, killed him, and thus destroyed them all; after which, growing frantic, she lighted up every room, smeared herself with blood, brandished her dreadful weapon, and was found marching about the house, and to and from the dead bodies, by the family, who coming home in the middle of the night, were amazed at the lights from the windows first, and much more afterwards, when they beheld the scene within.

I am here reminded of a tragical story told me by the late Mrs. P——, with the hero of which she was personally acquainted, having, while a child, seen him daily. One Alexander —— of Aberdeen, had seduced a pretty girl, who was pregnant by him. This girl, and one or two others, had risen at two o'clock to wash. While they were at their work, a whistle was heard, and the girl said "that is Sandy, I will go and speak to him." She said this with a kind of wildness and terror in her look, and was persuaded not to go: but she said she must and would, come of it what might, as if herself foreboding some ill. She could not be withheld; but going, said, perhaps she should soon be back. The night passed away, however, and instead of returning, if I remember rightly, she was never seen more: though her lover remained for some time in the place, till suspicion became so loud, that he thought proper to go abroad: for there was no proof to detain him, as no one could swear to a whistle, or knew what was become of the girl. After a lapse of years, he returned rich, but always deeply melancholy, and loving to be alone. This behaviour revived the memory of past events, and he was universally shunned, except by children, to whom he was particularly kind, and who therefore frequently played with him, and partook of the good things he gave them.

Discoursing at Opie's on the effects of terror, Northcote related, that two of his brothers were sitting by the fire, and as one of them slept, the other, by way of experiment, when he saw him about to wake, sat motionless, without appearing to breathe, and his eyes fixed on one object. The brother who had been asleep, watched him as long as his patience could hold, and then spoke, but received no answer. He spoke again and again, but still the same fixed, motionless, and as he began to dread, lifeless figure, sat before him. He was not a timid man, and the absurd joke ended without any bad consequences. But the picture which he afterwards gave of his own terror, was a strong one. N. also told the following story. A gentleman, followed by a servant in livery, rode into an inn in the West of England, one evening a little before dusk. He told the landlord that he should be detained by business in that part of the country for a few days, and wished to know if there were any amusements going on in the town to fill up the intervals of his time. The landlord replied, that it was their race and assize week, and that he would therefore be at no loss to pass away the time. On the gentleman's making answer, that this was lucky, for that he was fond of seeing trials, the other said, that a very interesting trial for a robbery would come on the next day, on which people's opinions were much divided, the evidence being very strong against the prisoner; but he himself persisting resolutely in declaring that he was in a distant part of the kingdom at the time the robbery was committed. His guest manifested considerable curiosity to hear the trial; but as the court would probably be crowded, expressed some doubt of getting a place. The landlord told him, that there could be no difficulty in a gentleman of his appearance getting a place; but that, to prevent any accident, he would himself go with him, and speak to one of the beadles. Accordingly they went into court the next morning, and the gentleman was shewn to a seat on the bench. Presently after, the trial began. While the evidence was giving against him, the prisoner had remained with his eyes fixed on the ground, seemingly very much depressed; till being called on for his defence, he looked up, and seeing the stranger, he suddenly fainted away. This excited some surprise, and it seemed at first like a trick to gain time. As soon as he came to himself, on being asked by the judge the cause of his behaviour, he said, Oh, my lord, I see a person that can save my life; that gentleman (pointing to the stranger) can prove I am innocent, might I only have leave to put a few questions to him. The eyes of the whole court were now turned on the gentleman, who said he felt himself in a very awkward situation to be so called upon, as [he] did not remember ever to have seen the man before, but that he would answer any question that was asked him. Well then, said the man, don't you remember landing at Dover at such a time? To this the gentleman answered, that he had landed at Dover, not long before, but that he could not tell whether it was on the day he mentioned or not. Well, said he, but don't you recollect that a person in a blue jacket and trowsers carried your trunk to the inn? To this he answered, that of course some person had carried his trunk for him; but that he did not know what dress he wore. But, said the prisoner, don't you remember that the person, who went with you from the boat, told you a story of his being in the service, that he thought himself an ill-used man, and that he shewed you a scar he had on one side of his forehead? During this last question, the countenance of the stranger underwent a considerable change, he said he certainly did recollect such a circumstance, and on the man's putting his hair aside, and shewing the scar, he became quite sure that he was the same person. A buzz of satisfaction now ran through the court, for the day on which, according to the prisoner's account, this gentleman had met with him at Dover, was the same on which he was charged with the robbery in a remote county. The stranger however could not be certain of the time, but said that he sometimes made memorandums of dates in his pocket-book, and might possibly have done so on this occasion. On turning to his pocket-book, he found a memorandum of the time he landed from Calais, which corresponded with the prisoner's assertion. This being the only circumstance necessary to prove the *alibi*, the prisoner was immediately acquitted, amidst the applause and congratulations of the whole court.—Within less than a month after this, the gentleman who came to the Inn, attended by a servant in livery, the servant who followed him, and the prisoner who had been acquitted, were all three brought back together to the same gaol, for robbing the mail.

14*th*.—The assassination of Buonaparte, the subject at Debrett's.

15*th*.—Met Arthur B——, who disbelieves the assassination of Buonaparte. It was much questioned at Debrett's. T—— loud, in asserting it was impossible that a general officer, surrounded by his staff, should be massacred. Tarleton already imagines himself and his staff, in P——. B—— remarked to me on the triumphant tone of the ministry, and their creatures, in announcing this intelligence. It is true enough, but party spirit never yet had understanding.

16*th*.—Walked with Tobin into the Park. Met various persons; among others, S——, the surgeon, as flighty and whimsical as usual. He walked with us; dropped us; then came up again; met another acquaintance, stopped with him, was presently with us again; and after first saying I was a deep observer of men and manners, asked me of what profession was the man he met. I had scarcely seen the man's face, and, cutting Addison's joke, desired him to give me the red hot poker out of his pocket, that I might swallow it as a first proof of my skill. He then said the man was a dentist. I replied, I was about to guess he was a Doctor, and should have been tolerably near the mark. Tobin tells me Dr. Beddoes is again going to lecture at Bristol on health and its preservation, that he hates physicians, that physicians hate him, and that he wishes to teach each man to be the guardian of his own health. Thomas Wedgewood, Tobin says, is so afflicted with bad digestion, that he is obliged to take several hours' strong exercise every day. Shooting and turning are part of his amusements. Metaphysics, the study he most delighted in. I told Tobin I wished for a school of health, one principal branch of which should be exercise, and its proper direction, tending to move the limbs and muscles in all modes, by running, stooping, &c., and that social games, which should powerfully stimulate, ought to be practised; bowls, trap-ball, &c., in fine weather. Billiards, marbles, and whatever would engage the attention, and give variety of action, should be studied. I mentioned the above as those that first occurred to the memory. Parkinson, jun., a good mineralogist. His father was offered twelve thousand pounds, and the title of Baron for his son, by a German Prince (of Hesse, I believe), for the Leverian Museum. It is intended to remove this museum into Bond-street, make scientific arrangements, &c., and exhibit it at half-a-crown, or by annual tickets. At present it does not quite pay the interest of the money. Parkinson, sen., a lawyer, acting chiefly as steward to various persons. Much talk with Tobin, concerning some manuscript pieces written by his brother, and not a little praised by him. Stoddart and Clementi to dinner. Read a scene from Lillo's "Fatal Curiosity" to them. Agnes and Wilmot concerting the murder. Critical remarks by S—— on the language. Called on N——, who mentioned an attack made on him by T——, editor of a magazine, meant to rival his Journal. The attack ignorant and artful. I advised either a perfectly good-tempered reply, or silence.

17*th*.—Walked to Westminster, to inquire concerning the picture of Angelica and Medora, but could not find Mr. Bates. Unexpectedly met Colonel Barry at Debrett's, just come to town. Lord Wycombe, speaking of Lord Cornwallis, says, "no man is more open in discussing any question, political, or appertaining to government, except such as relate immediately to his own office, and then, no man more close." G—— related of one B——, a gambler and famous billiard-player, that he was now in total discredit, after having lived in a very high style; to support which, he had been guilty of many notorious gambling frauds. He and one Captain —— met one evening at billiards, and played a long rubber for 50*l.*, which B—— easily won. The Captain said he had no more money then, but would come the next night, and play him for his own sum, for he was still convinced he was the better player. The appointment was made, and all the gamblers and sporting people, who heard of it, flocked to the place. Bets to a large amount were laid every game; the Captain won, and emptied most of the spectators' pockets: but the match was not finished, for he and B—— quarrelled, abused each other in very gross language, pretended to strike at each other with their cues, but avoided the blows by dodging, and separated in an apparently extreme heat. A person, however, who had been betting, happening to pass toward Berkeley-square, saw B—— and the Captain, under the wall of Lansdown House, dividing the bank-notes and money of which they had robbed the bettors. B—— was dealer to one ——, who kept a faro table; and three nights successively, a man came in towards the close of the play, staked a large sum on the card, and won it, to the total amount of two thousand pounds. He made a fourth attempt, but was refused by the table-keeper. B—— was suspected, and discharged; and was soon after seen dining at the tavern on Richmond-Hill, with the man who had won the two thousand pounds. Gamblers speak with most acrimonious rancour against those of their own set who betray them. They delight in conspiring against all the world besides: but bestow the epithets, thief, robber, rascal, &c. most plentifully when betrayed by one of themselves.

18*th.*—Conversed with E—— at Debrett's concerning L——, who was left joint patentee of Drury-Lane theatre, with landed property, houses, &c. of twelve hundred a year, or more. Married a green-woman's daughter because she was tall; himself above six feet: and, in a very short time, was little better than a beggar; yet never made any figure, even as a spendthrift. He had last night a benefit at the little theatre in the Haymarket, a poor house.

19*th.*—Breton at Debrett's, spoke of the tricks of Smithfield salesmen. He sent thirty head of cattle to market, came himself, unknown to the salesman, and watched his proceedings; a number, twelve I think, of bad cows were added to his thirty fat bullocks; the whole sold together, and he paid the average price; but made the salesman refund. Farmers are not allowed to sell for themselves, they must employ salesmen.

20th.—Mr. H—— observed, that the ship, Orient, had been the evil genius of the squadron of Brueys. It had prevented the going into the inner harbour. It would not suffer the squadron to anchor in very shallow water, and by blowing up in the battle did every kind of mischief.

21st.—Conversed with Erskine, Sir Francis Burdett, R. Adair, Courtney, Este, and Weld. Erskine of opinion it was wrong to give up agitating the question of reform without doors, i.e. out of the House of Commons. He had before remarked that the people had lost all spirit, which I denied, and, on this occasion, reminded him that the leaders of the people had abandoned them in a cowardly manner, and then had called the people cowards. Sir Francis Burdett is inquiring into the number of persons imprisoned on suspicion, and their treatment, meaning to state the particulars to Parliament. Erskine, as a lawyer, has great talents, quick conceptions, acute feelings, and uncommon power over juries; but as a man of grand plans, and inflexible principles, he is far from ranking in the first class. I this day completed my 53rd year.

23d.—Called on Sir William Beechey, who has lately given a delicacy of tint and reflected lights to the shaded side of his faces, which I think admirable; and, as far as my knowledge goes, peculiar to himself. He related the following anecdote of Serres, the ship painter. Serres took a picture or pictures of shipping, from England to the King of France, painted to commemorate some naval exploit of the French, and invited connoisseurs and artists to see his performance. Among the rest was the famous Vernet. Serres waited some time after Vernet had looked at the picture, till he became impatient to hear his opinion, hoping for praise, and fearing lest it should not be bestowed. "How do you like my picture," said he, "Mr. Vernet?" "Upon my word, Sir," replied Vernet, "you paint ropes exceedingly well." Nothing could be more satirical, or better mark the genius of the two men, than this reply. Vernet, like a man of genius, painted nature at large, and suggested her minutiæ, but never gave them in detail. Serres was incapable of any thing but detail, in which he was uncommonly accurate. Serres thought he revenged himself on Vernet, by damning him for a fool, that had never known how to paint a ship, which, in his sense, was true enough. He could not paint every shroud, rope, and tackle, &c. all which Serres had laboriously studied.

24th.—Mr. —— M.P. related an incredible anecdote of the Prince of Sicily; the present prince royal, if I do not mistake: that, being betrothed to an archduchess of Austria, and, as they could not meet, Germany, &c. being overrun by the French, being married by proxy, eight months after the marriage, he ordered his attendants to provide child-bed linen; supposing she must be brought to bed in a month, though he had never seen her. I said it was incredible, and he answered it was seriously asserted as a fact.

25*th.*—Mr. C—— surprised me much by a very liberal and friendly offer of the loan of two or three hundred pounds; thinking it might be want of money that induced me to sell my effects and go abroad. I answered, one motive was, that of being already in debt to persons who never reminded me of it, which I could endure no longer, much less to incur fresh obligations of the same kind; but that his offer was a strong testimony of the goodness of his own heart. That I was likewise desirous of familiarizing myself and my daughter, with the true idiom of foreign languages, and the manners of the people; also of reducing my expenses, and of absenting myself till certain prejudices in the public mind, respecting me, should subside.

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26*th.*—Sent the three first acts of the "Lawyer" to Mr. Harris. Walked with B——r to see P——, whose hands are excessively burned by extinguishing fire, which had caught his wife's clothes, and must certainly have burned her to death. His resolution was considerable. When the wife of B——r was sitting for her picture, B—— related the following anecdote. At the time of the last procession, he was painting K. G. who asked if he intended to see the sight, B—— answered in the affirmative. "It will be very fine, B——, very fine." The day after, when sitting, he again said, "Well, B——, did you see the procession, B——?" The painter answered he had. "How did you like it, B——? How did you like it?" "Exceedingly." "Had you a good sight, B——?" "A very good one. I saw it from a one pair of stairs, on the top of Ludgate Hill." "That must have been very fine, very fine indeed, B——. I wish I had been in your place. I should like to have seen it myself. But I could see nothing but the back of the coachman." Went to "the Jew and the Doctor" in the evening, which is a tolerably good farce.

27*th.*—Mr. —— at Debrett's, wished the Orange men of Ireland might raise another rebellion, and be all cut off and totally destroyed. Such is the miserably vicious state of the minds of the two opposite parties. Nothing will satisfy either, but the extirpation and blood of their opponents. Dined with Mr. F——. A Mrs. Remorande came to consult him on law business. Her husband, an Irish officer, in the French service, was guillotined by Robespierre; and she, finding means to secrete five hundred pounds, remitted the money to England. The person afterwards refused payment. She employed an attorney, and was told by another, one M——, the first intended to cheat her; and prevailed on her to let him continue the suit. She complied, and he soon obtained the money; but instead of receiving it, as she expected, an information was laid against her, and she was taken on suspicion before the Duke of Portland. Her story being heard, the villainous artifice of M—— was seen through, and she was released. He used fresh endeavours, and she was taken before the Westminster justices; but again set free. M—— had given instructions, in his own hand-writing, to his servant, how to proceed in accusing her. These were obtained: he was prosecuted, and promised, if they would stop proceedings, the money should be repaid. Her counsel incautiously took his word; and as it was a criminal prosecution, when it was dropped, he was no longer in danger, and mocked their credulity. He was arrested, however, for the debt, and put in the Fleet prison, where he now lies. This woman's story in France was still more remarkable. The outlines of it were these. The papers announcing her husband's death had arrived, and the tragedy was generally known to the inhabitants of St. Omer's, but not to her. The people around her were afraid to tell her of it. She is a woman of quick faculties, observed something remarkably unusual, gloomy, and strange in their countenances, and could not conceive the reason. One of them advised her to go to the play, because she was in need of amusement. This ridiculous advice she innocently followed; and her acquaintance at the play were so astonished at the indecency of such conduct, that she came away uncommonly agitated by behaviour she thought so affronting. Still she found the same mournful faces, and at last conjured some of them in God's name, to tell her what was the matter. One advised her, if she had any property, to secure it, for she was in danger. This alarmed her suspicions concerning the true cause, and they were confirmed by another, who answered her next question, by replying, "*il est parti*, he is gone." The famous tyrant, Le Bon, soon afterward came to Saint Omer's. Her person was seized; her property confiscated; her two children were torn from her; and she was ordered to prison. In the delirium of her distress, she braved this demon, called him *Scelerat*, and said, though he aimed at her life, she should live to see him cut off for his crimes. She was removed, however, to Amiens, among persons who were soon to be sacrificed, and her hair was shorn for that purpose. But at this period, Robespierre himself fell; she escaped; and, by an odd coincidence of circumstances, when Le Bon was on his trial, she happened to come to the town where he was tried, went to the court to see the man who had done her so much mischief, and entered it (he being on his defence) at the moment he was describing the fury with which she had resisted what he called the execution of the law. She instantly mounted on a seat; shewed herself to the court; and called, in the most impressive manner, to be heard. The judge was proceeding to commit her for disturbing the proceedings, till she announced her name, and the court then listened to her with the utmost attention. The impression she made was so great, that Le Bon sunk dejected, and offered no further defence to that charge. She supposes him to have been a man as extraordinary for his abilities, as for his cruelty and rapaciousness. Mr. Martinet, an emigrant, came to tea. In one respect, his was a similar story. He had taught French, with great reputation, in the university of Cambridge, where he had never agitated or concerned himself with political questions, yet an information being laid against him, he was ordered out of the kingdom. In consequence of letters written by noblemen, divines, and respectable men of all parties, this order was revoked; but he is not permitted to teach in Cambridge, consequently he has lost an income, which he had established by his abilities, of between one and two hundred a year.

28th. — Met Sir L—— C—— at Debrett's, and spoke to him to recommend N——'s academy. Was pleased with Pulteney's speech against the Income bill. Mr. G. Dyer drank tea with us, and told me of poems well written by Lord Holland. Imitations of Juvenal, one of them called Secession, in praise of his uncle, Charles Fox. B—— asserted two people had perished by the frost in the prison, nick-named the Bastille. Sir L—— C—— agreed with me in disapproving Tierney's motion against the Editor of the Times.

29th. — Letter from Harris refusing to accept bills for me. Wrote in answer. Informed Courtney of B——'s story; he had heard it of one person starved, but with aggravating circumstances that render it incredible.

30th.—Met Tierney coming from the park, and Tobin, jun.

31st.—Letter from Harris. Spoke to Lord Holland, requesting him to promote Mr. N——'s plan for an intended academy, which he promised to do.

1799.

January *1st.* — Lord Wycombe at Debrett's. Conversed with him yesterday on the Orleans gallery; and with Courtney on the subject of solitary confinement. Northcote present. Conversation chiefly on the perfectibility of man, Shakspeare, and painting.

2nd. — Mr. Harris called, and proposes to put the comedy in rehearsal nearly as soon as it is finished. Contended with Lord H—— at Debrett's, against precedents, and in favour of the patriotism of the people; which points he did not obstinately maintain. Spoke with P—— on the subject of the "Lawyer." Every body speaks ill of Boaden's play, Aurelio and Miranda, first performed on Saturday, the 29th ult. at Drury Lane Theatre. Dined with Tobin in Barnard's Inn, No. 7, his brother, Mr. W——, and E——. The discourse on Christianity, causation, &c. and politics. T—— one of those who defend the present tyranny of the French Government; from the enthusiasm with which they admired the late struggles of the nation for freedom.

3rd.—Mr. C—— brought me a hundred pounds as a loan. Seems very desirous I should not quit the kingdom. Accepted a draft for ninety pounds, at two months, drawn by Birch, for a Teniers and other pictures. Had a dispute with Weld concerning the frost of 1789 and that of 1795. I was wrong. Weld jocularly accused me of the trouble I took to have myself hanged; alluding to my surrendering myself when indicted for high-treason, though my prosecutors seemed unwilling to take me into custody.

4th.—Mr. Martinet, a French emigrant, called for the first time, the gentleman mentioned on the 27th ult. Billiards with a stranger. One G—— was at play in the morning, with a youth of the name of Frazer, and played barefacedly ill, to encourage him, meaning no doubt to lead him on and plunder him.

5th.—E—— at Debrett's. He used to be stiff and distant with me, he now seems to make it a point of being familiar. A great, and not an ill talker, little depth of thought, but much florid description. Sometimes with a happy poetic word. Weld, in conversation with me, gave a high character of Lord H——, in which, I think, there was little, if any exaggeration. His speech to the Lords against the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, as reported by the newspapers, has great and solid merit. His delivery, I fear, is not very impressive. I likewise fear he has not sufficient vehemence of feeling to become a man of genius. G—— has again been at play with young Frazer, and to-day thought proper to win a few games. The match is to be continued on Monday.

6th.—After writing the last, and chief scene in my comedy, yesterday and this morning, part of it from notes, but chiefly the labour of the two days, I walked with Fanny, and Louisa Mercier, into the park, where, though it was a quick thaw, numbers were skaiting; and had the day been clear, the morning picture would have been amusing. Met General M——, had a salute; a nod from Lord R. S—— on horseback.

7th.—Again transcribed, with additions and corrections, the last scene. Lord Holland, General Maitland, Mr. Weld, Mr. Hare, the Duke of Bedford, &c. at Debrett's. The hardships of the income bill discussed.

8th.—Wrote the first scene of the fifth act, the substance of which I had in my memory; and had the whole act transcribed, and the comedy sent to Mr. Harris. Saw P—— at Debrett's, and spoke to him of my intended Epilogue.

9th.—Harris called about three o'clock, much satisfied with the comedy, but advising some curtailments and slight alterations.

10*th.*—Wrote to Harris concerning the proposed alterations.

11*th.*—Made alterations in the Tradesman-scene, and returned the comedy to Harris, that Lewis might read Headlong before I curtail the Bailiff-scene in the third act. [This comedy came out at Drury Lane (much altered) in 1803, ran eleven nights, ill performed, and entitled, "Hear both Sides." June, 1808.]

12*th.*—Went with Fanny and Louisa to Holman's new comedy, first time, "The Votary of Wealth," a piece in which there is much to blame, and but little to commend. Heard Mrs. Atkins in the first act of Rosina. M. Le F—— and his wife in the same box; he pretended to regret we each had visited when the other was not at home, and to wish a more intimate acquaintance, but I doubt his sincerity. He is a man of the world, and his world has not been of the purest kind.

13*th.*—Called on P——, who read me quotations made by Belsham from Davenant, something like miraculously picturing the political state and government of the kingdom, though written, I believe, at the beginning of this century. Left the manuscript of "the Lawyer" with him to read. Called on M. Martinet—not at home, and on Mr. Nicholson. Mr. Godwin brought my manuscript with further remarks, of the same temper and complexion as his first: on which subject, as nearly as I can recollect, we had the following conversation.—H. "The first part of your criticism, which I have read, has, I own, both pained and surprised me. When you brought your tragedy to me, you gave a minute detail of the rules I was to observe in criticising your work, that you might properly benefit by my remarks, which rules you have not yourself in the least attended to. One of the first of them was, not to find fault in such an absolute and wholesale style, as might at once kill your ardour, and make you, if not disgusted with your work, yet so doubtful, as at once to damp all farther progress. Yet, having read mine, you come with a sledge hammer of criticism, describe it as absolutely contemptible, tell me it must be damned, or, if it should escape, that it cannot survive five nights, that the characters and plot are but transcripts of myself, and that every body will say it is the garrulity of an old man. I am well aware that the judgment of an author, on a work of his own, which he has lately finished, is extremely fallible; but a judgment he has, and must have, and I am firmly persuaded that this comedy (meaning 'the Lawyer') contains some of the strongest writing I have ever produced, and I stake my judgment, as far as the judgment of an author, under the circumstances I have described, can be staked, that instead of being damned, it will meet with no inconsiderable applause."—G. "I thought it my duty to speak my thoughts plainly. The opinion I have delivered, I delivered coolly, after due reflection, and I was desirous you should understand perfectly what my feelings were. My language was unqualified, but there is this distinction between my critique and yours, of which I complained. I have used no triumphing banter, which you did."—H. "Not in that part of my remarks which was general; nor ever, but when I supposed it would make you more clearly perceive the defect which I wished you to amend, than any other method I could take."—G. "There is another difference between us. Though I certainly give myself credit for intellectual powers, yet I have a failing which I have never been able to overcome. I am so cowed and cast down by rude and unqualified assault, that for a time I am unable to recover. You, on the contrary, I consider as a man of iron."—H. "It is true, I have been so hardened in sufferance, by the difficulties I have had to overcome, that when such attacks are made upon me, I think I may say, however egotistical it may sound, I can, in the language of Shakspeare, shake them from me 'as the lion shakes the dewdrops from his mane.' Yet if you imagine that sensibility is destroyed in me, the mistake is strange and unaccountable, considering how well you know me. On the present occasion, I lay wakeful and ruminating full three hours on the injustice and wrong nature of your remarks. At length I recollected the folly of such uneasiness, created chiefly by the pain it gave me to think you could act so improperly, and I then recounted to myself your great virtues, and how very trifling such blemishes are, when placed in comparison with them. This, as it ought, acted like a charm, and almost immediately calmed my perturbation. But it is right I should inform you, I had this perturbation; and that though I can overcome feeling, it is still as quick and vigorous as ever." We then walked, and conversed on other subjects till dinner-time.

14*th*.—Enquired of King, auctioneer, his terms of selling books: they are ten per cent. not including ten-pence in the pound King's taxes, but all other expenses, except that of conveying them to the auction-room. Lord Wycombe at Debrett's; read to me the strange account inserted in the Times of to-day, of Lord Camelford's attempt to go over to France; and commented on the pretended purity of ministers, who have lately conferred the command of a ship (a frigate as I recollect) on this madman. L—— related to me a whimsical story of a physician, who one night hearing lamentable groans and cries, went to search whence they proceeded, found a man and woman, drunk, thrown out of an overturned cart, hastened to a public-house to get aid, and in his care had them put to bed together, but returning the next morning, found the man in a rage at having slept with such a companion; and the woman making an intolerable uproar, weeping, and reproaching, asserting that her character was ruined, and that he must and should marry her; which accordingly the good-natured fool was persuaded to do. Called on Christie, his terms for pictures are seven and a half per cent., all expenses whatever included.

15*th.*—Met Mr. P—— at Phillips's auction-rooms. Thinks highly of "the Lawyer." Suggested an alteration that should omit the Bailiff in the fourth act. Will consider it. Conversed with Lord Wycombe at Debrett's.

16*th.*—Mr. Harris called, advised alterations in "the Lawyer," which I expect will be essential. His ideas, though crude, have awakened reflection. He promised to put no other comedy in rehearsal, till he had my answer within a fortnight.

17*th.*—Made notes for altering the character of Sir Ralph. Lord Wycombe, Marquis of Townsend, Rans, &c., at Debrett's. Read the three last acts of "the Lawyer" to Louisa and Fanny; their feelings were strong, yet from their variations I could discover some defects. Reading such manuscripts is a good experiment.

18*th.*—Account in to-day's Morning Chronicle of the Norwegian that died at 160, enjoying his faculties to the last. His name, I think, Surrington. Girton, a landscape designer, looked at my pictures, and praised them highly. After the Wilsons, his attention was most deeply attracted by the landscape by Artois.

19*th.*—Barry, the painter, R.A. spent the evening with us. His conversation as usual rapturous in praise of the arts. Speaks, and, I believe, thinks highly of Fanny's attempts at drawing; not of her knowledge or execution, but of her feeling for character and beauty. Saw Mr. Wheeler going to Fulham, who was astonished and rejoiced, having supposed me dead. Asked me to dine with him in the country.

20*th.*—Received a begging letter from a person, signing himself J. K——, the chief features of which are ignorance and servility. I thought it my duty to refuse his request. I learn —— intends to read lectures on law; in which political government is to be introduced, and the established systems of this country highly praised. Expressed the pain I felt, that a man of such superior powers should act so false a part, and so contrary to his convictions, of which I must, in all human probability, be able to form a tolerably accurate opinion, from the many conversations I have had with him. His judgment was (and, doubtless, still is, for his faculties are in their full vigour) so clear, his perceptions so penetrating, and his opinions so decided, that I can conceive no possibility of their being so totally changed. Read Dryden's Translation, Ode 29., B. 1., of Horace; part of Macflecnoe, and his verses on young statesmen, 1680; aloud.

21*st.*—Report at Debrett's, that Paul Benfield is ruined. Was told he went out to India a carpenter, got employment as a builder, learned the art of making money breed, and came home worth 300,000*l.*

22*nd.*—The union of Ireland is now the whole subject of political discourse. Ministry seems determined, and their opponents hope, though faintly, it may put an end to their power.

23*rd.*—Met Sir F. B—— in Bond-street, who reminded me of my promise; then H——, who would not see me, ('tis the fashion of these folks to those they think their inferiors,) and afterwards C. Grey, M.P., who was less aristocratic, and gave me a nod. Lord S——'s Address in the Chronicle and Post. T—— calls him mad. I expressed a different opinion to Weld, who agreed, and said there was method in his madness.

24*th.*—Met General H—— again. He spoke to me, for it was not in Bond-street, and his pride had no alarms. Such pride is pitiable, and excites to resentment, but to resent would be equally weak.

25*th.*—At Debrett's. General H—— described the black chief of St. Domingo, Toussaint, after General Maitland. He is a little man, about fifty, toothless, lively of temper, and ambitious.

26*th.*—Call from Watts; another from Tobin, who had lent me the Sorcerer, translated from Veil Weber. He and his brother praised it as the first production in the world. I told him, I think the author a man of genius, but that his book is written in a taste no less disgusting than immoral, besides being deficient in several of the essential parts of composition, as, a choice of subject, conduct of the fable, probability, &c. Attwood came and told me the performers gave high applause at the reading of "the Old Clothesman." Met Knight, who is to play Florid, and who wanted to tell me it as a secret, which I refused to hear. Dibdin, comedian, and author of the Jew and the Doctor, was with him. I like him, because he spoke so earnestly in praise of the virtuous principles of his brother.

They are illegitimate sons of Dibdin, the musical composer, whose conduct towards them is highly reprehensible. The young man said he had seen his father so seldom, that, having weak eyes, he should not know him if he met him in the street. I invited him to my house. The news at Debrett's was the failure in the Irish Parliament, of the attempt at a union; and not only there, but in the streets, it was the subject of general conversation. All whom I heard mention it, rejoiced. Naples, they say, is in the possession of the French. The king, having fled with eight thousand troops to Sicily, after twenty thousand others had laid down their arms to eight thousand French. The substance of this I suppose to be true.

28th.—Finished the alterations in my comedy. Debrett's full. The conduct of the Irish parliament relating to the union, the whole subject of political conversation. Read a criticism in *La Decade Philosophique*, No. 8. An. 7,—on a French translation of Hugh Trevor, containing great praise, and some pointed blame. The chief articles of the latter are,—that the plan proposed is incomplete [true], that some of the conversations are too long [true], that my satire on professions is unfounded [false], that I have not put my morality sufficiently in action [false again, the law part excepted], that probability is not quite enough regarded [perhaps not], and that, to make Trevor so suddenly a wealthy man is entirely in the novel style [true; blamable]. The following are the concluding remarks: "Malgré ces défauts qu'on peut reprocher, comme nous l'avons vu, à beaucoup de romans, mêmes très-estimés, celui-ci mérite assurément d'être distingué par la justesse des observations, la vérité des tableaux et des caractères, le naturel du dialogue, la peinture exacte des mœurs et des ridicules. En un mot, c'est l'ouvrage d'un penseur, d'un homme de talent, d'un observateur habile et exercisé, d'un ami des mœurs, et de la vertu; disons encore d'un écrivain patriote, hardi défenseur des droits sacrés du peuple, et de telles productions sont toujours faites pour être bien accueillies."

29th.—Called on Opie; saw a portrait, whole length, of a lady, excellent. News of a second defeat of government in Ireland, 109 to 104 against the union. Pitt, in answer to Sheridan, on the debate here on that subject, said, Sheridan seemed determined to have the last word; to which Sheridan replied, he was satisfied with having the last argument. When Dundas brought the sealed bag, containing the proofs which are to be examined to shew the necessity of a union; Sheridan, seeing there was not much in it, jocularly said to Dundas, "Confess the truth, is there any thing in that bag, except the report the committee are to bring up?' H——, M.P. related these as extraordinary witticisms. The one was a ready reply; the other, a sarcastic question, naturally resulting from his knowledge of the practices of people in office: nothing more. Sent my comedy to Harris, with a letter. Called on Northcote.

30*th*.—Sat to Mr. Opie, first sitting for my portrait, intended for Colonel Barry. Mr. G—— has a portrait of me painted by Opie, which was exhibited last year, a most admirable painting and likeness. Received a letter from Harris. A very excellent sonnet in to-day's Herald on Winter. General H—— told me, that Burns, who has written a pamphlet on the union, cites an expression, which is become proverbial in Ireland, i.e. "Put an Irishman on the spit, and an Irishman will be found to turn it."

31*st*.—Second sitting to Opie. He related an anecdote of a man in Cornwall, who being half drunk, and near a dreadful precipice, suddenly fell, but happened to catch with his hands; on which he began to pray, in a confused and terrified manner, till he was so exhausted that he could hold no longer, and at last loosed his hold; but scarcely descended a yard, being not quite so far on his road as the precipice; from which, if he had fallen, he must probably have been dashed to pieces. The disappointment must have been an odd sensation. Opie knew the man.—S——, a painter, told us of his journey over Mount Cenis, when those winter winds characteristically called Tormento, by the Italians, prevailed, which will not let the snow rest till it becomes lodged in cavities, filling them up, and making one even surface, dangerous to the lives of the most experienced guides. S—— has been in India, where he was painter to the Mogul; and dignified with a Persian title, appointing him a general, and calling him the Royal Falcon of War, though he was in no other capacity than that of painter; but such cut-throat titles are there the only honourable distinctions, according to him, that are conferred.

FEBRUARY 1*st*.—Dr. B—— and —— loud in praise of Dr. Drennan's pamphlet against Pitt. Third sitting to Opie. Called on Birch, who thinks Phillips gets better prices for pictures than Christie. Mr. and Mrs. Opie, Mr. and Mrs. Perry, Marian, Miss Barkley, daughter of Sir Robert, Northcote, and Sir F—— B——, in the evening. On the whole a pleasant party.

2*nd*.—Fourth sitting to Opie, a short one, and only for the coat. A report at Debrett's of the massacre of the Neapolitan nobility by the Lazaroni. Conversed with Lord Wycombe on the native ferocity of the Irish. Conjectures run high, that Pitt will breed a serious civil war in that country. Read three acts of my comedy to S——. It is still capable, and indeed in want of great improvements.

4*th*.—Mr. Harris came by appointment, and we were mutually of opinion farther alterations would greatly improve the comedy. Sale of Stuart, the artist's, pictures at Phillips's rooms.

5th.—Este, Dr. Towers, Parry, jun. at Debrett's. Towers, a character worth drawing. Drank tea with P——, who wished me to mention manuscript travels written by Brown, to Robinson.

6th.—The foot walk in Hyde Park one sheet of ice, on which, not being aware, had a severe fall. No news at Debrett's. Letter from Knight to Attwood, declining to sing "The Joys of Eating, &c." in the Old Clothesman. Russian leather. Mr. Breton said the report was, that the recent death of the Duke of L—— was occasioned by poison self-administered. This is probably as unfounded as another report, which proves to be false, that Lord C—— had lost seventy thousand pounds to the Duke of B——, and had then destroyed himself. Lord Cowper is alive, and the Duke says he never spoke to him in his life. It is true, indeed, the Duke of L—— had ruined himself by gaming, and had endeavoured to drink away the remembrance of it.

7th.—Wrote to Mr. Harris concerning Knight's song, &c. Nothing at Debrett's.

8th.—Pitt at present thought insincere for pretending to persist in the measure of a union. List of Wakefield's jury from Mr. Foulkes.

9th.—Finished my second alteration of "the Lawyer." Lord D—— at Debrett's; of opinion that the union is a dangerous affair to Pitt. The death of Mr. Rans of Moorhall, with whom I had some slight acquaintance, announced in the papers. Bought the Crucifixion, a Caracci, highly finished, at Phillips's, the property of Pugh, a surgeon, who gave eighty pounds, or guineas, for it. A Metzu sold for ninety-six guineas. The subject, a man on horseback, with host and hostess at an alehouse door; bought by a young man, related to Lord Fitzwilliam.

11th.—Sent my comedy and a letter to Mr. Harris, stating the price I required. He refused, and immediately returned the comedy. Borrowed and repaid 18*l.* 16*s.* to Mr. Robinson, and 60*l.* for a month, of Mr. S——.

12th.—Sat to Opie. Wrote to Mr. P——, informing him that having seen Mr. Robinson, if Mr. Brown will send his manuscript, and the price, Mr. Robinson would return an answer. Read a manuscript of Mr. Tobin, jun.

13th.—Agreed with Mr. Phillips, auctioneer, to sell the whole of my effects at five per cent., including all charges, except that I am to remove books, prints, and pictures to his sale-room at my own expense. Had a second fall on the unthawed snow, by which the spinal bone is so sore I can hardly walk. Phillips, speaking of Count Kelly, characterised him as uncommonly liberal, and a great lover of the arts. Phillips sold his library, and asked permission to introduce some very indifferent books of his own, which he estimated at forty pounds. The Count disliking this, took the books at the estimate, sent them to Stockholm, had a printed catalogue of them, and sold them by auction. This was a thing totally new to the country, and drew numbers of people, some of them from a considerable distance. The books sold for 120*l.* and the Count remitted the money to Phillips.

14*th.*—Wrote Finale and a new song for Incledon, in the Old Clothesman. The dishonourable proceedings of Boyd and Benfield, the topic of the day. The justification of Boyd, a lame, or rather a condemning tale. Saw P——; informed him of what had passed with Harris.

15*th.*—Sat to Opie.

17*th.*—Messrs. G——, Clementi, Master Field, Mr. and Mrs. Opie, Mr. and Mrs. F—— to dinner. Field played a concerto and other things of his own composition. Is a youth of genius, for which Clementi loves, admires, and instructs him; highly to his own honour.

18*th.*—The opinion that Pitt has again lost a favourable opportunity of treating with France is pretty general.

20*th.*—Sat to Opie. Called on Sharp, and paid him for his print of ——; which he said if I kept would become of great value, for it was the last on such a subject, meaning the destruction of war, that would ever be published. Guessing the reason of this whimsical assertion, I mentioned Brothers, of whom he talked in his usual style. The wisdom of man, he said, counteracting the wisdom of the Creator, had occasioned all our miseries: but the tongue of wisdom was now subdued, meaning Egypt, which was not only a slip of land resembling a tongue, but the place in which the learning of the world originated. Thus, by the help of a pun and a metaphor, he had double proof, which he accepts as indubitable. Syria, Palestine, and all these countries are soon to be revolutionized; and those who do not take up arms against their fellow men, are to meet at the Grand Millennium. The earthquake is still to happen, and the peaceable, even if uninspired, are all to be saved. So that I, being one of them, were temples to tumble over my head, should find some miraculous nail or rafter, or something else, equally wonderful, to save me from being crushed. I asked him, as I had formerly done, why the earthquake did not happen at the time positively appointed by Brothers; and he said, that unless I were one of the inspired, it was a thing he could not explain. Last summer he had retired to a lonely place near, or at Kilburn; and there he himself had been absolutely favored with a revelation, communicating to him personally, beyond all doubt, the revolutions that are immediately to happen. He is a worthy and excellent man, and in spite of this insanity, has an acute, strong, and inquiring mind. Notwithstanding my cross-questioning him, he has a strong desire to make a convert of me; and knowing the principles of peaceful benevolence which I hold, has no small hopes of succeeding. He was happy at the idea of having more talk on the subject, though I both plainly and ironically, in conversing with him, treated it as it deserves, except that I forbear as much as I can to wound him. He said he was greatly gratified that, though I argued against Brothers, I never called him rascally impostor, and other abusive epithets, common in the mouths of his opponents. Laughed with —— at Debrett's, at T——'s account some time ago, of the prodigious stone, or rocky fragment, that was rained on his estate. —— said, T—— was only half mad, and that vanity was the possessing demon.

21st.—Sat to Opie. Lord Wycombe brought the report to Debrett's of the loss of the Proserpine frigate, with Mr. Grenville, his suite, and the whole crew. Sent Mrs. —— a one pound note, as a present relief.

22nd.—Argued at Debrett's against the immorality of invective, for which I consider Mr. Wakefield as very blamable. Received a note from Mr. ——, asking in the name of a friend to admit some pictures in my sale, which I refused, as a public deception, and for other reasons.

25th.—Met R. A——, who walked with me up Bond-Street. Disbelieves the loss of Grenville. Fox still determined on retirement. Tobin called, and inquired my thoughts on his brother's manuscript, which I gave him.

26th.—Sent the following notice to the Commissioners for the Income Bill. "I have no income; that is, I have neither landed nor personal property, that brings me either rent or interest. My income has always been the produce of my labour; and that produce has been so reduced, by the animosity of party spirit, that I find myself obliged to sell my effects for the payment of my debts, that I may leave the kingdom till party spirit shall subside."

27th.—Sat to Mr. Opie.

28th.—Sat to Opie. Sir L—— C—— at Debrett's, glad to see me; a man of unaffected manners, no pride, or as little perhaps as a man of wealth and title can have, and with patriotic and benevolent intentions. Lord Wycombe walked with me down Piccadilly, to inquire after my picture of Angelica and Medoro.

MARCH 1*st*.—Sat to Opie. Northcote there, who warmly praised his whole length of Mrs. Price, and his Old Soldier, and Girl with Beer. Phillips came, read the catalogue, and approved my lotting of the pictures. Called and saw his Wouvermans' Hawking. Parry, jun., is given to hope for a verdict in his favour, by Erskine.

2*nd*.—Sat to Mr. Opie. Aided to catalogue the German books.

3*rd*.—Louisa and Theresa to breakfast. Spyring to tea. Informed Col. Barry of the business of to-morrow; viz. my marriage with Louisa, and received his hearty congratulations. He had seen my portrait, was highly pleased, and gave Opie a draft on his banker.

5*th*.—Went after breakfast at ten, and sat to Mr. Drummond, Carlisle-street, Soho, at the request of the proprietors of the Monthly Mirror. Taken in crayons, size of life. A call from P——; he told me they (meaning his friend, Mr. Brown, and himself), had closed with Cadell for a thousand guineas, that is, had sold the copyright of Brown's travels into Egypt, Darfoor, &c. for that sum.

6*th*.—Went a second time and sat to Drummond.

8*th*.—Called on Opie; but the morning so clouded after a fall of snow, that it was too dark for him to paint, in the present almost finished state of my portrait.

9*th*.—Sat to Opie. A snowy and very bad day for the picture sale. Difficulties made by ——, the auctioneer, concerning the prices marked by me, though he had himself required I should mark them. Thirty-seven lots of my pictures bought in.

10*th*.—Mrs. Holcroft visited by Mrs. and Miss B——, Mr. and Mrs. P——, and by Mr. and Mrs. Opie in the evening. Mr. Brown, the traveller, called.

12*th*.—Walked with Louisa in search of lodgings. Mr. B—— to dinner, and accompanied me, Sophia, and Louisa to the theatre Drury-lane. The Secret, and Feudal Times, both of them very dull and indifferent.'

END OF DIARY

CHAPTER VIII

MR. HOLCROFT soon after went abroad. On his arrival at Hamburgh, he went to lodge at the house of his daughter and her husband, Mr. Cole, who was settled there in trade. He afterwards went to reside at the house of ——, where he paid five pounds a week; and as his remittances from England were often interrupted, he would have been reduced to great distress, had it not been for the generous exertions of a stranger, a Mr. Schuckmacher. This gentleman, who was a merchant, advanced 250*l.* to Mr. Holcroft, on his note of hand. The first literary attempt which Mr. Holcroft made after he was settled on the continent failed. This was to set up a journal, (the European Repository) containing an account of the state of foreign literature, and anecdotes of celebrated characters. It only reached the second number.

It is certain that Mr. Holcroft's introductions, and his connexions with literary men abroad, would have afforded every opportunity for executing such a work well, had it met with encouragement. While at Hamburgh, he visited Klopstock, Voss, Sander, &c. &c. On his first introduction to Klopstock, the latter laboured to shew the superiority of the German to every other language in conciseness; and challenged Mr. Holcroft to translate with equal conciseness into English. To which he replied, that Klopstock might be easily supposed to overcome Holcroft, but that the English language ought not to suffer on that account. He told Mr. Holcroft a story of Voss, the celebrated classic; that at a time when he was too ill even to hear a scholar read and parse a few lines in the classics, familiar as they were to him, he was still able and desirous to continue his translation of Ovid in Hexameters, and found relief from this laborious task. When Baron Stolberg (the superintendant of the academy) came to visit him, he hid his papers, lest he should be accused of neglect of duty, or blamed for disregarding his health. Sander, a Dane by birth, informed Mr. Holcroft that the Road to Ruin, and the Deserted Daughter, had been translated into the Danish language, and that the latter had been the most popular of the pieces brought out the preceding winter at Copenhagen.

The admiration of the Germans for English literature, and their contempt for the French, are well known. Molière is the only man among the latter, to whom they allow much genius. Their notions of excellence are indeed rather hypercritical than common-place. They seem in general to assign the highest stations to the greatest men, but their list of great men is short. There are only four whom they consider as *poets*, that is to say, inventors of a new style, namely, Homer, Dante, Shakspeare, and Goethe. Why the last should have this high rank assigned him, I do not know. He is placed by the Germans themselves far above Schiller. Mr. Holcroft while abroad, translated his poem of Herman and Dorothea. A note from the author to the translator on this subject, will be found among the letters at the end of the volume.—Mr. Holcroft also, while he was at Hamburgh, finished and sent over the comedy of 'Hear both Sides,' and his translation of 'Deaf and Dumb,' which were afterwards acted with success, at Drury-Lane.

On his departure from England, he had renounced all idea of picture-dealing, and connoisseurship. He however attended several picture-sales, but without attempting to bid. One day as he was strolling along the street, his attention was caught by a small picture, which lay among some lumber at a broker's shop. He went in, asked the price of it, and was answered three guineas. Mr. Holcroft made no bargain, but determined to go home, and get Mrs. Holcroft to come and look at it, to see whether any one else must not be as much struck with it as he was. On re-examining the picture, his confidence in its being an original increased, and he paid the money for it. As he was returning home in triumph with the picture under his arm, he met Mercier, (Mrs. Holcroft's father) who had himself been a dabbler in pictures, and who, laughing, exclaimed, 'A ce trait je connois mon sang.'

The first step being got over, they consulted together, how to turn this accident to advantage; they henceforward frequented auction-rooms, and ransacked brokers' shops, to make mutual discoveries of original pictures, which might be had for a song. Mr. Holcroft, in this manner, laid out between four and five hundred pounds, by which he expected to clear at least double the sum.

In this expectation he was once more wretchedly disappointed. Not that the pictures were in themselves bad, they were many of them excellent, and in general by the masters to whom they were attributed; but they were not the finest specimens of those masters, and with respect to second rate pictures, it requires either an acquaintance with the particular master who happens to be in vogue for the time, or regular connexions with other picture-dealers, to secure the purchaser against loss. The pictures which Mr. Holcroft sent over to England, were fifty-seven in number. They were entrusted to the care of Mr. Godwin. He prevailed on some professional friends, to go and look at them, who thought they would hardly sell for the amount of the custom-house-duties, which were a hundred-and-fifty pounds. A few of them were however brought away, and left in the care of Mr. Opie. The following friendly letter to Mr. Holcroft, was written on this subject.

'*December* 5, 1799.

'I am quite ashamed that your letter should have remained so long unnoticed; but being at Norwich when it arrived, I thought it better to wait till I came to town, and had seen the pictures mentioned in it, that I might at the same time I answered it, give you some account of them.

'The pictures I found, through the care of Mr. Gillies, safely lodged in my house on my return to town, which was only three days ago. With the sketch by Rubens, I am quite charmed; it is really a most exquisite thing. The portrait is a good one; but is not the likeness of Lord Stratford, nor painted by Vandyke. The other two are not at first view so much to my taste, nor am I convinced they were painted by the master to whom you attribute them; but I cannot speak decisively, till I have examined them with more attention. Care shall be taken of all, but the Rubens I have mounted into my painting room, as it contains a great deal worth studying.

'You will do great injustice to the sentiments of esteem and friendship, which both Mrs. Opie and myself feel for you, if you do not rest assured that to hear of your health and welfare, will at all times give us pleasure; and we have only to beg that in your next, you will make no other use of your *bridle*, than to lay its reins on the neck of your affection, in the utmost confidence, that all that comes from you, will be received with a most hearty welcome.

'I am, with the highest esteem,
'Yours most sincerely,
'J. OPIE.'

These pictures were all of them afterwards redeemed from the custom-house; and with those which Mr. Holcroft had bought in at his first sale, and other purchases he made on the continent, sold for near 700*l.*

While at Hamburgh, Mr. Holcroft met with one of those alarming accidents, of which, in the course of his life, a more than usual number fell to his share. He had been recommended to bathe his feet in hot water, and mix a certain quantity of aquafortis in the bath. As he was pouring the aquafortis into the tub, the steam of the water caused the bottle, which was of very thin glass, to burst; the aquafortis flew up to his face, burned his wrists to the bone; but luckily his spectacles saved his eyes. The state he was in was dreadful, yet not a single complaint escaped him. 'Thank God,' he exclaimed to his terrified wife, who just before the accident had wished to pour the aquafortis in, but was prevented from doing so, 'You and the child (whom she held in her arms) are safe!' His daughters, who were undressing in the next room, alarmed by the shrieks of Mrs. Holcroft, rushed into the apartment, which was filled with steam; and the distraction of the youngest at seeing the condition her father was in, deprived her of all presence of mind.

'For Heaven's sake, Fanny,' said her father, 'calm yourself; and do you, Sophy, listen to what I say. Let Dr. Maclean be immediately fetched: he lives in such a street. Your violent grief, my dear girls, instead of good, does harm. Be collected, and act like rational beings.' It was more than two hours before he was attended by his friend, Dr. Maclean. Till he arrived, Mr. Holcroft supposed himself deprived of sight; and the joy which the assurance that he was not blind excited may be easily imagined. During a long and painful confinement, he was perfectly cheerful, and his mind always employed and active.

Two years before this accident, Mr. Holcroft was so dangerously ill as to be given over by his physicians: and at that time his fortitude and presence of mind saved his life. One night the spasms, to which he was subject, were so violent, that he felt, if they continued, he could not live. Dr. Pitcairn had advised him to take a very small quantity of laudanum, beginning with five drops, which he might increase to fifteen or twenty at the utmost, should the pain become worse. Finding the pain grow more and more violent, he desired his amanuensis who attended him, to give him fifteen, then twenty drops at a time. This he took to the amount of 140 in the course of the night. Mr. Ralph expostulated, and said he was afraid to give them; but Mr. Holcroft insisted—'If these pains continue,' said he, 'it is impossible I should live, and I can but die.' This bold but dangerous experiment succeeded.

Mr. Holcroft's stay at Hamburgh lasted above a year. He had some difficulty in procuring a passport to Paris from the French minister at the Hague, (as we were then at war with France), but on a second application he succeeded. He had also met with some impediment in obtaining one from Mr. Frere, before he went abroad. While he was at Hamburgh, a paragraph appeared in one of our morning papers, directly charging him with being a spy of the French government. To this paragraph he condescended to make a public answer.

Mr. Holcroft remained above two years at Paris. While here, he seems to have been chiefly occupied in collecting materials for the large work on the manners, &c. of this capital, which he published after his return, in 1804. Of this work (Travels in France, &c.) it is only just to say, that it is one of the most interesting and instructive books of travels in the language. Its fault perhaps is, that it bears too hard on the foibles of the French, which Mr. Holcroft seems to have regarded too much with the eye of an Englishman. Their own self-sufficiency, it is true, is enough to provoke and justify considerable severity of criticism. With respect to the question itself of the difference between the two nations, all that can be said upon it, I think, amounts only to this, that the one has too much gravity, and the other too much levity. Our gravity frequently degenerates into phlegm, coldness, reserve, pride, obstinacy, and sullenness; as their constitutional levity is productive of frivolity, pertness, unmeaning loquacity, self-conceit, fickleness, and indifference to good or evil. The feelings of the French are more quick and lively; those of the English more deep and permanent: again, their apprehensions have more facility and nicety of observation; our own countrymen have shewn greater strength and comprehension of mind. France has, I am persuaded, produced more clever men than England; but that she has produced more great men than England, cannot be pretended. The mind of a Frenchman is, in general, more easily moved, and by slighter causes; an Englishman's feelings are, for the very reason that they require a greater momentum to bring them out, more steady and more strong. I do not here inquire into the superiority of the French or English character. I only state what I conceive to be the difference with a view to those among the French, who, setting up an exclusive claim to certain qualities, will not allow others the superiority in things which are totally distinct, and who are ready to grasp all excellence, however incompatible, to themselves. Those who wish to be furnished with facts illustrative of the peculiar manners and character of the French, will find ample materials for this purpose, accompanied with refined and discriminating reflections, in the Travels of our author.

I shall insert only two examples, which may shew the pointed felicity with which Mr. Holcroft has selected his traits of national character. 'My wife,' says Mr. Holcroft, 'was one day buying some fish; and while she was undetermined, the girl said to her —"*Prenez cela, car votre mari est un brave homme.*" My wife replied,—"*Oui, cela se peut bien; mais comment savez-vous qu'il est un brave homme?*" "*C'est égal,*" answered the girl, "*cela fait plaisir à entendre.*" This girl's maxim is sound morality wherever I have been in France.' The difference between words and things is certainly less marked in France than in England: how far this is an advantage or a disadvantage, I do not, for my own part, pretend to decide.

The other story is highly honourable to, as well as characteristic of the French. Their humanity, whatever else we may think of it, costs them less than it does the English.

'A poor musician, who usually brought a small pianoforte in the afternoon to the *Champs Elysées*, and played, that those who were pleased might reward him by a trifle, having played in vain one evening, was sorrowfully retiring home. He was seen by Elleviou, (a famous actor) remarked, and questioned. The poverty and ill success of the wandering musician moved the pity of the actor, who desired the instrument might again be put down; and stepping aside, he said he would return instantly. His wife and friend had passed on, and he brought them back. It was nearly dark. Pradere, his friend, sat down to the pianoforte, and accompanied Elleviou, who began to sing, to the astonishment of numbers that were soon assembled. The men had drawn the hat over the brow: Madame Elleviou put down her veil, and went round to collect; the pleasingness of her manner, the little thankful curtsies she dropt to all who gave, the whiteness of her hand, and the extraordinary music they heard, rendered the audience so liberal, that she made several *tours*, and none ineffectually. Elleviou, however, could not long remain unknown; and finding themselves discovered, Madame Elleviou gave all, and it was supposed, more than all, she had collected from the crowd, to the poor musician: the sum amounted to thirty shillings; and among the pence and halfpence there were crown pieces, which no doubt were given by the actors. The feelings of the scene as the audience dispersed, are not easily to be described. The unexpected relief, afforded to the man who was departing so disconsolate, was great indeed: but it was forgotten in the charming behaviour of those who relieved him, in their almost divine music, and in the strangeness of the adventure. The surrounding people were scarcely less moved; so kind an act from a man in such high public estimation, excited more than admiration; and the tears of gratitude, shed by the musician, drew sympathizing drops from many of the spectators. This event gave birth to two new musical pieces, which were both successful.'

This was certainly an action of which an Englishman is incapable, but to which every Englishman will give his warmest tribute of applause. When people dispute and cavil about one another's actions, it is only because there is something wrong or absurd on both sides.

The Travels through France, &c. were published by Phillips, and Mr. Holcroft received 1500*l*. for the copy-right.

After Mr. Holcroft's return from the Continent, in the summer of 1803, almost the first undertaking in which he embarked was the establishment of a printing-house, in connexion with his brother-in-law, Mercier. Mr. Holcroft found unexpected difficulties in this business, owing to the want of sufficient capital to carry it on. Meeting also with many heavy losses in publications which he undertook to print on his own account, he found himself under the necessity, in order to satisfy the pressing demands of his creditors, to dispose of the printing-office, having previously obtained his partner's consent to do so.

Mr. Holcroft brought out six dramatic pieces while he was abroad, or after his return to England: Deaf and Dumb, The Escapes, Hear both Sides, a Tale of Mystery, the Lady of the Rock, and lastly, The Vindictive Man. All of them, except the last, were successful.

Those which became the greatest favourites with the public, were, Deaf and Dumb, and the Tale of Mystery, a melo-drama. Both of these are certainly exquisite in their kind, but of the first it is not too much to say, that it is one of the most beautiful and affecting stories that ever was exhibited on any stage. It is taken from the French play of M. Bouilly, which was itself founded on an incident in the life of the famous Abbe de l'Epée, instructor of the Deaf and Dumb.

Julio, the heir of the lord of Harancour, who is born deaf and dumb, is left an orphan, when he is only eight years old; and the helplessness of his situation suggesting the possibility of getting rid of him, he is taken from Thoulouse to Paris by his guardian and maternal uncle, assisted by a servant in the family, and there lost in the streets at night. Dupre, the accomplice of his uncle Darlemont, swears to his death; and at their return home, Darlemont is invested with the estates and honours of the house of Harancour. Meantime, poor Julio is found in the streets of Paris in a coarse dress, which does not denote him to be any thing but a beggar; and it being discovered that he is deaf and dumb, he is taken to the asylum of the Abbe de l'Epée for children who are born with this defect. The melancholy observed in his countenance and manner, the delicacy of his complexion, and other circumstances, soon lead to a suspicion that he is the child of rich parents, and has been purposely lost by some person who wished to usurp his rights. He is taught the use of artificial signs, and learns to read and write. One day being with De l'Epée, when a judge is passing by dressed in his full robes, Julio is violently agitated, and makes signs to his instructor, that his father used to be dressed in this manner. Another time, passing through the Barriere d'Enfer, the recollection suddenly struck him that this was the very gate through which he entered Paris. This produced a conviction in the mind of L'Epée that he came from some city in the south of France, of which in all likelihood his father had been chief magistrate. Yet how to proceed in his behalf? The youth had never heard his father's name, he did not know his family, or the place of his birth. After some ineffectual researches, De l'Epée resolves at last to take his pupil with him, and traverse in person and on foot the whole of the south of France. They embrace each other, invoke the protection of heaven, and set forward. After a journey, long, fatiguing, hopeless, they at length arrive at the gates of Thoulouse. Julio knows the place, seizes his benefactor's hand, and uttering wild cries of joy, leads him quickly, here and there, through various quarters of the city. At last they come to the square in which the palace of Harancour stood; he stops, points to the mansion, shrieks, and falls senseless into the arms of L'Epée. This is the foundation of the story, the rest may be easily divined by the reader.—The Vindictive Man was the last, and certainly not the best of Mr. Holcroft's dramatic productions. It was condemned at Drury-lane. From the state of his circumstances at the time, this failure was felt as a severe blow, by the author. With what feelings he bore it, may be learned from a short, but beautiful dedication of the play to Miss Holcroft.

'TO MY DAUGHTER FANNY.

'To you, my dear, I inscribe this comedy, because you approved, nay, was partial enough to admire the scenes, progressively, as they were written, and the play, when it became a whole. I inscribe it to you, because you have dedicated your talents, by your literary efforts, to the cause of morality, and have need of that patient resignation to which every writer is doomed. I inscribe it to you, and in this sense to my whole family, with sympathetic tenderness, as a solitary testimony of true and ardent affection: as such, I am well persuaded you will all receive it, though it has been publicly condemned. You will remember the giver; and the gift, though barren, will be welcome.'

Besides the plays which have been enumerated, Mr. Holcroft, after his return to England, published 'the Theatrical Recorder,' in two volumes, a small volume of Poems, called 'Tales in Verse,' and the novel of 'Brian Perdue.'

Mr. Holcroft, at the time of the failure of his last play, had several dramatic, as well as other manuscripts in hand, which, had he been allowed to finish them, would have easily relieved him from his temporary embarrassments. He had however a young and increasing family to maintain; and the ill health, with which he had long struggled, now encreased fast upon him, and rendered all his efforts vain.

Mr. Holcroft had, for nearly a year, been so much troubled with an asthma, as to render walking difficult to him. He was not, however, confined to his house till about half a year before his death. His disorder was violent spasms, accompanied with spitting of blood, and an enlargement of the heart, occasioned, as was supposed, by continual anxiety. It was during the two last months of his illness, when he could no longer rise from his bed, and when every effort to speak was almost convulsive, that he dictated the account of his own life, which has been inserted in the beginning of these volumes. Let it remain a proof of the energy of his character, and of that superiority of the mind over the body, which was one of his strongest sentiments. Through the whole time he discovered a fortitude in suffering, which has rarely been equalled: nor did he till the very last relinquish the hopes of recovering. If any thing could exceed the patient courage with which he passed through this trying scene, it was the affectionate, unwearied assiduity with which Mrs. Holcroft attended him night and day, through the whole. For the last six weeks, she scarcely once quitted his bed-side for a quarter of an hour together. The task was one, to which duty and affection were alone equal. In any other circumstances, her strength would have failed under such exertions: but Mr. Holcroft was not satisfied unless she was with him, and that consideration prevailed over every other. Colonel Harwood, his son-in-law, was with him from the Sunday evening before he died; on which day, his physicians, Dr. Buchan and Dr. Hooper, had given him over. Many of the following particulars are taken from Colonel Harwood's account.

There was not the shortest interval in which he was not in complete possession of himself. The only slight indication to the contrary was that he once said to the Colonel, 'I have great difficulty sometimes in rousing my mind; therefore, if at any time I stop in speaking to you, do you remember my last word, and join it to the next that I shall afterwards say to you.' This however rather implied his strong efforts to preserve his intellects, than the failure of them. His stopping at any time in the midst of a sentence appeared to be always owing to the difficulty of articulation, rather than the loss of memory. When he was so far gone, that it was difficult to understand him, he desired those who were with him to repeat his words, that he might be sure they were heard, and then nodded assent.

On Sunday he expressed a wish to see Mr. Godwin, but when he came, his feelings were overpowered. He could not converse, and only pressed his hand to his bosom, and said, 'My dear, dear friend!' On Monday, he again wished to see Godwin, and all his friends that could be sent to: but he had not strength sufficient to hold a conversation: he could only take an affectionate leave, and then he said, he had nothing more to do in this world. He afterwards frequently spoke, or moved his lips, as taking a most affectionate leave. A little before he died, he called for wine, and refused it from every hand that held it to him, till his eldest daughter took it into hers, he then bowed his head to her, and drank it; thus, in some way or other, shewing signs of regard to all, till his last moments approached. Hearing a noise of children on the stairs, he said to his wife, 'Are those *your* children, Louisa?' as if he was already disengaged from human ties. On Thursday night, about half past eleven, he seemed in great pain, and said to Mrs. Holcroft, '*How tedious*, My affections are strong.' It was thought from this that it would be a relief to his feelings, that they should retire: they all went into the next room, Colonel Harwood still keeping his eye upon him; but seeing his struggles increase, and being desirous to spare his wife and daughter a sight they could not have borne, he returned into the bed-room, and gradually shut and fastened the doors, which Mr. Holcroft observing, shewed evident signs of satisfaction. And seeming then easier, he smiled, and fixing his eyes on his friend, took them no more from him, till they were closed for ever.—Thus died a great and good man, who shewed in the last and most trying scene of all the same firmness of mind, and warmth of affection, which had distinguished him through life.

Mr. Holcroft died on Thursday, the 23rd of March, 1809, at the age of 63.

The following is the report which Dr. A. P. Buchan, and Mr. A. Carlisle, favoured Colonel Harwood with, who also attended the examination.

'*London, March 24th*, 1809.

'*Statement of the Anatomical Inspection of Mr. Thomas Holcroft, aged* 63.

'The examination took place twenty-four hours after decease. The body was considerably emaciated, and slightly anasarcous throughout. An extensive cicatrix at the upper part of the sternum, and at the junction of the neck with the breast, indicated some long continued chronic abscesses. The cavity of the abdomen contained about a pint of dropsical water. The stomach, intestines, mesenteric glands, kidneys, and bladder, were free from diseased structure. The liver was about twice the natural bulk, hard and tuberculated on its surfaces. The peritoneal covering of this viscous substance was marked by numerous opake spots, where the membrane was drawn into folds, and this appearance seemed to characterize a series of inflammations. The interior texture of the liver was tuberculated. The gall-bladder was much distended. The outer surface of the spleen had much of the appearance displayed by the liver. The cavities of the thorax contained about two quarts of dropsical water. The lungs were soft, and their air-cells free. The heart was large, and bore the relaxed character which often occurs after a long-continued laborious circulation. The coronary arteries had begun to ossify. The arch of the aorta was dilated, approaching to aneurism, and the texture of its coats had become hard and inelastic. The descending aorta and the primary iliac arteries had become completely ossified in several parts, and were unduly dilated. From the facts here adduced, it may be considered, that the diseased structure of the liver, and of the heart, and its principal arteries, led to the dropsy of the chest, which might be the immediate cause of death, although in a frame so disorganized, life could not have been much longer protracted. Whether the disease of the liver preceded that of the heart and its vessels, or the contrary, and whether they were distinct diseases, and which of these led most decidedly to the fatal event, are subjects for uncertain speculation.'

LETTERS TO AND FROM THE AUTHOR

LETTER I

To a Friend. 1799

You, and many other of my friends, were informed of my motives for quitting my native country, and residing some few years abroad: till more peaceable times should again render that country to me what it once was; admirable for its general industry, manners, and morality; and undisturbed by the suspicions and persecutions, with which other countries were, and too often still continue to be, afflicted. Nothing but the strange terror which had seized the public mind could have engendered that spirit of individual rancour so foreign to the English character, which suddenly spread through the nation; and nothing but the stupor of mind, under such an impulse, could have made me suspected as one of the heads of the abominable Hydra, to extirpate which every Englishman was summoned. The fear was itself ridiculous: but, in their consequences, such fears have been fatal to many a worthy man.

I cannot recollect these things unmoved: neither can I hear various false reports of my being obliged to quit England, and of my not being suffered to return, without wishing that those who give them credit may be undeceived. My departure from England was voluntary; as is my absence. I cannot live in danger from Laws which I have not violated, or power with which I do not contend. I carefully shun the acrimony of political dispute, and the circles in which it is indulged. To the utmost of the little ability I have, it is my desire to inform, with the hopes of benefiting mankind; and this end cannot be attained by making them angry. In action, heart, and principle, I am, or would become, the friend of man. The only enemy I encounter is error; and that with no weapon but words: my constant theme has been, let it be taught, not whipped.

The letters I mean to address to you are intended for the public; and of these facts I wish the public to be informed and reminded.

You must not, therefore, be surprised that I speak of them in this place. Whatever fable may invent, or credulity believe, I pledge my veracity to the world, that what I have above said is literally true: and may the world treat my memory with that ignominy, which a falsehood so solemn and gratuitous would deserve, if I prevaricate.

Avoiding the pursuit of this painful subject, the busy memory recurs to another, equally ungrateful: I did not quit the circle of friends, in whose intercourse I found so much benefit, and took so much delight, but with the bitterness of regret. I could not sit in apathy; and see the few effects I had collected become the scattered prey of brokers and dealers; and chiefly my library, on which so much of my money and time had been bestowed, squandered, twenty and more books in a lot: several of them individually of greater worth than the price paid for the whole. It seemed the dissolution of my social life; and something like the entrance into a wild and savage state. What multitudes of such thoughts did my afflicted heart suffer without giving them utterance! It would but have communicated and increased affliction.

I wish not to dwell on these dark parts of the picture. Who quits the country of his fathers without a sigh? Yet, who journeys forward to lands unexplored without hopes of strange and unexpected pleasures? It is a season full of apprehensive emotions, flutterings of the heart, and hopes and fears too numerous to be defined. At least it is such to those to whom travelling is not become a habit.

Some people have asked, why are books of travel so much read? It is because they are so often entertaining. Customs, when they differ but little from our own, seldom fail to excite our surprise, our laughter, or our contempt. Without crossing the seas, a man who has the faculty of noticing the remarkable, the whimsical, and the absurd, in his daily walks at home, never fails to entertain, if he think proper to narrate and to comment; and the traveller who wants this faculty of observation journeys to little purpose, and is heard with little pleasure. He sometimes even endeavours to falsify the true reports of his predecessors; and to offer the dulness of his discernment as a proof of his impartiality. Thus much by way of introduction.

LETTER II

Let us begin our journey; and whet your imagination to fill up the narrative.

We were sufficient in number to occupy a small cabin; and various reasons determined us to sail down the river, instead of posting by land to Yarmouth. Wind and weather out of the question, he that depends on the word of a captain, for the day that his vessel will be ready to sail, will be deceived ninety-nine times in a hundred: a week of additional latitude is often too little. Not thoroughly aware of this, we left the polite parish of Mary-le-bone, and removed to the purlieus of London-Bridge. How many thanks are due to our worthy and liberal friend, G——, for the many invitations he gave us to his table, and the pleasant urbanity with which we were there treated. But these, you well know, are not the only acts of kindness for which we are indebted to this free-hearted, worthy man.

About two days before we went on board, a sudden difficulty seemed to start. We were told we should be stopped at Gravesend, if we had not a passport. This seemed incredible: we inquired, and some affirmed, and others denied the necessity of such a document. Could an Englishman want a passport, to go wherever his business or his pleasure might invite him, within the British domains, or to a neutral state? By many the idea was scouted, and as it proved, justly. Yet others were so positive in affirming the reverse, that I thought it prudent, for full security, to go to Gravesend, and inquire.

It happened to be at the hour when the tide served, and the common passage-boats were ready to sail; and, as this was a cheap, an expeditious, and to me a novel conveyance, it was in every sense acceptable. Those who have made the experiment, know with what solicitations they have been invited to step on board first one boat and then another. On this occasion, it happened that the Queen Charlotte, and the Prince of Wales, were rivals: but, as I was first harangued by the orator of the Charlotte, and had no other preponderating motive, the right seemed to be in her; and I was escorted, with great eagerness and civility, to my seat.

I had heard so much of Gravesend passengers, and the peculiar rhetoric in which they indulge, that I thought it probable they would detect something ridiculous in the cut of my coat, the colour of my hair, or some other feature or appurtenance about me. I was not deceived. The shortsightedness that obliges me to wear spectacles, has often subjected me to the derision of the working community; who never suspect there can be a rational motive for walking the streets with what they generally regard as a badge of supreme folly. I had not taken my place five seconds, before I saw the leer and the wink go round. The weather being fine, every body was on deck; and the assumed gravity of my look, at first checked risibility. But the pause was short. An impudent fellow opposite to me, looking in my face, said—'The next time I go to court, I will get a saddle for my nose; because I see it is all the go.'—'You had better get a handle to your hat,' said the man at the helm, whose invitation to come on board I had followed; and who therefore, I suppose, thought proper to be my champion. My assailant knew his man; and, without noticing this retort continued.—'I 'll ask my granny to leave me her barnacles. Pray, Sir, how many candles may you see in the dark, when only one is lighted?' 'How many fools did you meet, when you last dipt your pate in a pail of water? Who gave you that coarse net-work, to cover your face? Why did not you ask your wife to wash it before you came out?' [The man was scarred with pock-marks, and the river tar continued.] 'You 're a pretty fellow to hoist the slang-flag! Where did you learn gull shooting? you are an apt scholar! You could eat a giblet-pye before you could spell goose *****.' Enough of these vulgar but merry kind of combats. Would that the well-bred duellist were as harmless!

I believe it was here I first remarked one of the many superstitious habits of seamen; that of whistling for a wind. I find it is common to them all; from the captain to the cabin-boy. The day was more calm than either the passengers, or the boat-men wished; and, to beguile the time, a man sang the beautiful ballad of Black-Eyed Susan. Having ended, another told us a tragical tale, which the song no doubt had brought to memory.

The mate of a ship had a sweetheart; who came on board the evening he was to sail. She was a pretty girl, and deeply affected. Her love was strong, or rather violent. Having drawn him aside, she told him, if they parted, she was certain they should never meet again; and that she had not the power to leave the ship. He remonstrated on the impossibility of her stay; but she could listen to nothing but her passion, fears, and forebodings. She wept, intreated, went on her knees; and, if he would but consent, said she would hide herself in the forecastle, till the ship should be under way. The mate, who could not comply, at length reproved and left her in anger; while she threatened her own destruction. He went below; and, not seeing her when he returned on deck, he concluded she was gone. Alas! the poor agitated, and despairing creature, had thrown herself over-board. She had done it unseen; and the mate, immediately afterward perceiving that the boat in which she came was waiting, began to inquire: but no one knew what was become of her. He recollected her proposition to hide herself, and went in search: certain, as he supposed, she had made the attempt. She was no where to be found: his alarm increased; his cheeks became pale. One man said 'he had heard something fall into the water; and to be sure it must be she. Who knew but she might have been thrown over-board?' Suspicions arose: the pallid hue and wild terror of the poor mate, gave them strength: he was taken into custody, tried for the supposed murder, and in great danger of suffering death; so strong did the circumstances against him appear to be, in the opinion of his judges. One witness, however, was very clear in his testimony, that he saw the mate go under hatches, and leave the deceased on the deck; that he likewise saw him return; and that it was during this interval, the accident must have happened: for that he and others had accompanied the mate in his search to find her. Thus the positive and accurate evidence of this witness, saved his shipmate from an ignominious death.

The life of a man, in a court of law, depends upon a breath. Remember it, you who sit in judgment on the lives of your fellow creatures!

Another told us how his cabin-boy (he was himself a sea-captain) jumped over-board in a rough sea, to recover a mop; which he had accidentally let fall. He succeeded; but it was at the risk of his life. 'I asked him,' said the captain, 'how he came to do such a thing? and the little hell-spawn told me, "he was afraid I should *give him the cat*; if the mop had been lost."—I'll give it you to some tune, lubber, said I, if you do such a thing again.'—So much for a captain's humanity. This is no bad instance of the general despotism exercised on board of ships.

Fine writing will object to the coarseness of phraseology in this letter; and, under other circumstances, I would not give fine writing such cause of complaint: but, were it changed in this place, we should no longer be in company with sea-captains and passengers from Billingsgate in a Gravesend boat.

LETTER III

We parted during a calm, in my last; but remember we are not yet at Gravesend. In wit, vulgar or refined, puns are more frequent agents than wits generally suppose. Hearing a child cry in a woman's arms, a sailor exclaimed—'So! We have a squall: we shall soon have a breeze.'—'Yes,' replied a second, 'I hope another hand will be put to the bellows.'

It so happened that the punster was a prophet. The sails swelled; and the steersman told us 'we could not have a better wind, if we had bought one.' To which another added—'he wished he could find the way to the weather-office.'

I doubt if there be a nation existing more skilful and alert, on the water, than the English. The Thames in particular, has vessels so numerous, and of such various kinds, riding and traversing its waves in such endless directions, that the unaccustomed eye is confused in its attempts to distinguish and individualize the moving multitude. Ships, snows, brigs, sloops, cutters, barges, lighters, boats, vessels of every form and size, and from all regions of the Earth! My heart beat, while I watched the dexterity with which they mutually shunned the shocks, that at every returning moment, threatened each other with oversetting. Of this we were once in danger. The steersman of a heavy barge, had his attention called away, perhaps not three-seconds, from his duty; and it was with the utmost exertion, and presence of mind, that the active fellows on board the Charlotte kept her from running foul of the barge. The danger past, they were enraged; and began to rate the barge-man: who, angry with and ashamed of himself, bade them in a surly tone 'mind their own business.' 'You don't mind yours,' aptly retorted one of them. 'I 'll be damned if you are he that set the Thames on fire.'

I was not a little amused by an itinerant bookseller, one of the passengers; who opened his pocket, and spread his wares upon deck: and, to astonish and invite customers, among other things, exhibited a small quarto, on botany, with coloured plates; which, he told us, was for a *surprising* learned gentleman, at West Thurrock. (Apropos of Thurrock. All book-men are addicted to etymology. Pray was this the rock of the gothic god, Thor?) Among his literary treasures was a sixpenny description of the passage, by water, from London to Gravesend; by the erudite Bibliopole Pocock, of the latter place: from which, if you have the patience to read it, you may discover how many reaches, or windings, are in this traject. Pillaging this boatman's history, and pointing to the shore, our sagacious tradesman told us, 'all those houses were built in *one* day's time.' The prevaricating knave ought to have given a different emphasis; and have said "in one *day's* time." But wit was always a shuffling fellow, and seldom a friend to truth.' The hawker's jocularity, from the same source, was next exerted on a church, of which we had a prospect: which he said was as *light* by night as it was by day! Of the truth of which quaint pun the inventor had no doubt. Yet the unvarying force of gravitation is not perhaps absolutely certain. But I am now getting out of my depth; and will therefore hasten on shore to Gravesend. In despite of the noble stream that washes the banks, this said Gravesend is a dirty, disagreeable place; and for pitiful extortion unrivalled. If you have but little money in your purse, or if you feel indignation or sorrow, at beholding man in the daily practice of petty theft, till the confirmed habit, makes him believe thieving to be justice, and necessary to his happiness, arrange your affairs, so as to make but a short stay at Gravesend. It was my good fortune to remain there only one night. My journey was unnecessary: no pass was required. But of this I was ignorant. The expense and trouble were trifling, the characters and scene of action new, and the pain of uncertainty was relieved. And now thank your benignant stars, that you have escaped from a Gravesend-boat, and have only paid so trifling a tax on good sense, and good manners. The potentate of the North, at whose breath all things shake, having honoured a yatcht by his presence, issued an edict, commanding that it should no longer remain a paltry yatcht, but become a glorious frigate. Peter was not so great as Paul; for Peter could only change a brown loaf into Banbury mutton.

LETTER IV

And now comes the day of departure: and now farewel for a time to London, that hive of souls; itself the soul of Britain, the seat of action, the city of great events! Farewel to many pleasures, and to many pains! to friends in whom the heart delighted! to foes that persecuted they knew not why! we go in search of better days.

Before we embark, suffer me to make an observation, and tell a story. Fortune is a capricious jade; she flies from those who pursue; and pursues those who shun her. The remark is old; but not, I believe, the tale to which it leads.

In the town of Halberstadt, not long ago, there lived a tanner, remarkable for having been made enormously rich against his will. During the seven years' war, the French, being at this place, had collected all the cattle in the environs, the skins of which they had to sell. The tanners of Halberstadt had but little power to buy, one alone excepted. To him the French applied; but, not understanding speculation after a certain quantity, he absolutely refused any more. Conquerors are not to be trifled with; and finding that their persuasions, which indeed were numberless, could not prevail, they resorted to the *argumentum baculinum*, and the tanner was at last beat into compliance. It was however under the condition that the other tanners would, at a fair price, lend him their tan-pits; and for this the argumentative French very readily undertook. The tanners were summoned, refused, and the rhetoric of the bastinado was again employed. It was resistless; the tanners let out their tan-pits. The tanner, who bought the hides at one-sixth of their value, parted with the dollars he had been so desirous to retain; and, in a few years afterward, became the wealthiest tanner in Germany.

I will give you another example of the caprice of this said Madam Fortune.

In Germany there are lotteries of various construction. Of one of these the law is, that he who draws a first prize, a second, and a third, shall the fourth time be one of the five that are to draw for the capital lot of I know not how many thousand dollars. A cooper, who loved to tap the barrels he hooped, bought a ticket, which came up a prize once, twice, and thrice; but the foolish fellow was thirsty; and being offered drink for the present, and money to buy more for a fortnight to come, he could not resist the temptation, and sold his ticket, which was a fourth time the fortunate number. He comforted himself with his can; and made a second venture, with exactly the same good and ill success. To another man this would have been horribly vexatious; but the jovial cooper let it pass; and when the next lottery came, made another purchase. The third time it had arrived at the third stage of winning, and he was again on the point of parting with his chance. By something of persuasion, and something of force, the reckless fellow was prevented. 'Fortune,' said his friends, or perhaps his wife, though this is the kind of husband a wife knows least how to manage, 'Fortune absolutely persecutes you to accept her favours: why do you so perversely cast them from you?' For once the sot heard reason; and the doctrine of chances proved how dangerous it is to lay the long odds; for the cooper's ticket again gained the great prize.

From us Fortune is flying; and we are now in pursuit. The sequel will shew how perverse a jade she is, and how determined not to be overtaken.

On the first of July, 1799, we went on board the Kennet, Captain Thomson. All was confusion, all hurry. Barges, loaded with prodigious bales, lay beside her; a dozen men were straining every nerve to raise them over her side, and stow them between her ribs. It excited attention and surprise to see these cumbrous packs wedged with such contrivance as scarcely to leave a vacancy. Every thing that suppleness of limb, thews, sinews and muscular force could effect, was in continual exertion. The vessel was to fall down the river the next tide; which seemed incompatible with the labour to be performed.

With what additional wonder do I recollect scenes like these in my native country, having compared them with the inattention I since have witnessed. Here every man was active and intelligent; and one even supremely above the rest. Indeed it was prodigious. He was the mate; he directed the whole; his eye was every where; and his arm seemed to work miracles. He was full six feet high; and when the ponderous load seemed to defy their collected strength, he came, applied his giant force, and, at the first pull, it began to move. His agility was no less surprising, and almost irreconcilable to such bulk; for his wrist would doubly measure that of an ordinary man. His understanding was equal to his bodily power; he instantly saw what was wrong, and the way in which it was to be rectified. Give but his faculties another circle of action, and an epic poet might have made this man his hero: yet he was but the mate of a ship, subject to a captain who, though no fool, was far indeed from his equal; and when I asked him if he did not mean to be a captain himself, answered with a sigh—'I wish, Sir, I may ever have so much good fortune.'

In what a traverse and frequently ludicrous manner does accident arrange the place and office of man, and the affairs of this poor world!

The mate's name was Baird; and he and his commander were both Scotchmen. In the invoice, he was written captain, and the captain supercargo; a falsehood to which the infamous practice of pressing has given birth; a mate, like a foremast man, being liable to be pressed.

When I came on board, and saw the work that was still to do, I concluded it was impossible it should be accomplished. The mate himself doubted, but hoped, and worked like legion. Yes; we were at Gravesend the next day, where we were examined at the Alien Office; and on the evening of the third, anchored at the Nore.

The ocean was before us; the evening was calm; the expanse vast; the shores of Essex and of Kent were to the right and left; and the fleet with which we were to sail, with our convoy, and the admiral's ship that guards the Nore, were all in view. The silence that reigned was suddenly interrupted by the eight o'clock bell, that rang from vessel to vessel; and, much more agreeably, by the admiral's military band. We were at a proper distance; and the music came so softened to our ears that it was delightful.

The captain went on board our convoy; received his sailing instructions; and the next morning the fleet, about thirty in number, was under weigh.

Owing to the closeness with which the ship was stowed, the decks were so belumbered, that it required the catlike activity of a sailor to pass, without a fall, to the forecastle. I supposed they were so to continue. How much was I mistaken! No sooner was the business of setting the sails performed, than the active Baird began a clearance. All hands were at work; the hatches opened; room for stowage still was to be found; cables were coiled; and, in less than half an hour, no signs of disorder or incumbrance were to be seen. In some things, how full of caution is a sailor! How active is he, and how orderly on the approach of storm or battle! What contradictions are there in his habits! The least appearance of defect in his shrouds, braces, or rigging, must be repaired: his decks must be daily washed; to every thing that regards the safety of the ship, the strictest attention must be paid. He must not sleep more than four hours at a time, and never soundly: the least alarm must bring him upon deck. His eye must alternately be upon the watch; his apprehension of danger must never cease. Meanwhile, his own convenience is utterly neglected. Being at sea, he puts on any dirty or ragged jacket, sleeps upon boards or ropes, and feeds on the coarsest fare. Our cook was half covered with grease and tar; his hands were uncommonly large, and chapped; and he washed his dishes with a cable's end. It often happens that the sailor's beef is half putrid, his butter and cheese the same; his biscuits swarming with maggots; and his water stinking. To this he is sometimes by necessity reduced; and the landsman is astonished at the habits which such hard necessities have taught. But a voyage to Hamburgh is seldom of so much severity; and the pampered passenger as seldom goes to sea unprovided.

LETTER V

Our convoy was sluggish, and we were off the Norfolk coast on the fifth. We gave it some few parting sighs, remembering the relations and friends that were there; and who, perhaps, had they known the incident, would have brought down their telescopes, to have taken a last view. Was it affection or vanity that gave me this thought? Let it be permitted to hope the best.

He that makes a voyage and meets with no adventures, using the common phrase, must be greatly in or greatly out of luck; unless indeed we suppose him fast asleep, which, with the convenience of a close carriage, is the way that most travellers see the world. A watchman, shut up in his box at midnight, without the aid of his candle and lantern, sees it as well. We were willing to keep awake, and were not in want of stimulants. I had been to sea before more than once, yet had numberless things to remark: especially as I had never before sailed with a convoy. The Kennet was a good sailer; but if we ran before our guardian, we were liable to have a ten-pounder sent, with a possibility of hitting us, as a warning order to *keep astern.* If we were too close, the peril was that of *running foul* of the ships *under the Commodore's lee.* If the weather *fell* hazy, this danger increased. If it was a calm, we must no less carefully keep our distance. Should you have supposed that, being on the boundless ocean, you must always have sea room enough, the above hints may help to rectify your mistake.

On the sixth, we were off the Texel; on the seventh saw Lord Duncan's fleet; and on the eighth were still upon the Dutch coast. I repeat what the mariners and their charts told me; for I could not see land. The sailing under the protection of cannon balls, the *look-out* that was kept for the approach of an enemy, and the hostile fleets of Britain proudly riding on a threatened shore, inspired thoughts which——I will take another time to tell you what these thoughts were. We caught gurnels, a pretty but cruel warfare. The wretched animal was generally an hour gasping for the medium in which, till then, he had breathed, and dying with difficulty.

A more animating incident occurred. Perhaps you are ignorant that smugglers, if pursued, will sink their cargoes of gin, and leave a buoy; by the aid of which they are sometimes recovered. From one of these, as it was supposed, a keg was seen to come swimming among the fleet. The sight awakened two passions at once—drunkenness and ambition. To what dangers do they expose the thirsty, the daring, and the rash! The fleet was under sail; and the keg swam in a contrary direction. We perceived a consultation was held on board a ship but little distant. In a moment, one of the sailors began to strip. We watched his proceedings with surprise and apprehension; we saw him plunge into the sea, and stem the waves with such eagerness that it seemed impossible for his strength not to be presently exhausted. How impatiently did the eye pursue him, his head now hidden, and now seen dancing among the waves, till we could no longer catch a glimpse. It was a fearful distance. There was something so daring in the attempt, and so vigorous in the execution, that he became a kind of hero; in whose dubious fate every heart was interested.

Meanwhile the sailors, who first discovered the prize in question, *lay to*; that is, turned the ship so that the sails did not catch the winds: and hoisted out their boat. In this they went in search of the swimmer and the keg. We could not discover their proceedings; but we learned, after their return, that the sailor had overtaken and seized the object of his wishes; and they brought him and his prize once more on board of the ship to which he belonged in triumph.

A rash action, when successful, never fails to be admired. To people who live on shore, the remarks, language, and adventures of mariners are often amusing. The answers, however, which the latter return to passengers, are frequently surly, and expressive of contempt. Sailors, I assure you, are as pragmatic, and full of pedantry, in their way, as any Doctor the Universities can afford. Men are always surprised at, and diverted by each other's ignorance; forgetting their own.

The seaman, however, has a feature common to us all; he is pleased with those who will listen to his complaints. One of our men told me how long he had served on board a man of war, the sufferings he there endured, and painted the despotism of naval officers, in the anecdotes he related. A Captain, who perhaps had read Culpepper, or some such erudite author, thought proper to physic his crew regularly once a month; and to take care the doses he prescribed were actually swallowed. This was not all; if the men were sick afterwards, they were put in the bilboes, to convince them they were well; and one poor fellow, who was extremely weak, was flogged for not running fast enough up the shrouds.

Another of these commanders having given a man three dozen lashes on the starboard of the vessel, ordered him two dozen more on the larboard; that, as he said, one side might not laugh at the other.

The man cited many more incidents of a like kind; adding, that when on board a king's ship, he many a time wished himself dead. Observe, I can only be answerable for my own veracity; I faithfully repeat what I was told.

I shall be equally accurate in what I am going to relate; though it is on a subject which some naturalists have treated as absurd. The Captain and Mate of the Kennet, had both navigated the Coast of Norway, the Northern Ocean, and the Atlantic; and I questioned them concerning the Kraken. They neither of them pretended to have seen this supposed stupendous monster of the waters: but they immediately expressed their firm conviction of its existence. I asked their reasons; and they affirmed it had been twice seen within the last four years.

The first instance they cited was that of a Captain coming from Archangel, or Greenland, through the Atlantic; who was surprised at the appearance of rocks unknown to the chart of mariners, and immediately ordered out his boat, to have them examined; meanwhile the Kraken, that is, the imaginary rocks, disappeared, and he sailed over the place; but forgot, during his astonishment, to sound.

Their second instance was more circumstantial. About two years and a half before the time at which they spoke, a Dane, sailing through the Firth of Forth, on the coast of Scotland, was so terrified, at the appearance of rocks in such a place, that he *lay to*; being for some time persuaded that he had lost his reckoning, and had arrived he knew not where. After consideration, he took courage, and sailed past them; and when he arrived at Dundee, gave a relation of what he had seen. Finding himself at first disbelieved, he and his crew made oath of the fact; either at the Custom-house or before a Magistrate of Dundee. The narrators were both Scotchmen; and affirmed they spoke of the attestation being thus made from their own knowledge. Persons, who shall deem it worth their trouble, may easily make an inquiry whether any such attestation exists at Dundee.

My informants confirmed, unquestioned, the usual accounts, fabulous or not, that fishermen find plenty of fish on the back of the Kraken; as they do on sand banks, at a certain distance below the surface; and that these fishermen hasten away, as soon as they perceive the Kraken beginning to rise; because when it goes down, it occasions a dangerous whirlpool. These, you will recollect, are the old stories of Pontoppidan.

Finding this Leviathan so familiar to their belief, I next inquired if they had heard, or knew any thing of the sea-snake, by some called the sea-worm? To this question I received a still more direct answer. The Mate, Mr. Baird, who certainly was not a liar by habit, whatever mistake or credulity might make him, assured me that, about the midway in a voyage to America, in the Atlantic, he had himself seen a fish, comparatively small in the body, of from forty to fifty fathoms in length; and that it had excited great terror in the Captain, who was well acquainted with those latitudes, lest it should sink the ship.

They both related other stories, concerning the appearance of this sea-worm: asserting that it will rise out of the water as high as a common main mast.

Should you ask, do you repeat these things because you think them credible? I answer, no. But who can affirm he can mark out the boundaries of possibility? Some mariners treat these tales as absolutely false and ridiculous: others seriously affirm them to be true; and I think it a duty to collect evidence, and to remain on this question as on many another, in a certain degree of scepticism.

They spoke of another fact; which, supposing them to speak truth, deserves attention. The waves in the Western Ocean are sometimes so oily, from dead whales, as it is imagined, that they are not much disturbed by a brisk gale. The sailor's brisk gale, observe, by you and me would be called a high wind.

LETTER VI

Remember I left you in a gale at sea, and a high wind on shore: but what would you think of a stiff breeze? I heard one described by a sailor, who swore that it shaved him; that he could not keep his hair safe on his head; and that it made the ship sneeze. His metaphors, and the composure with which he spoke of a tempest, that to a landsman would have been so full of terror, were amusing.

Our voyage was performed by the aid of gentle gales; and we got in view of Heligoland on the morning of the 9th. Being now out of danger from an enemy, the ships were allowed to part company, and each make the best of her way. To people weary of the qualms and inconveniences of a sea-voyage, and impatient to arrive at the place of their destination, with the latent hope of unknown pleasures from unknown sources, this was welcome news. The Captain was teazed with our questions; and we were much disappointed to find there was little hope we should yet see Hamburgh, within four and twenty hours.

It was late in the day before we arrived at the red buoy, where usually the pilot comes on board. We now entered the Elbe, the navigation of which is both difficult and dangerous, if circumstances are unfavourable; and I could not but admire and most sincerely applaud the precautions taken for safety, and augur favourably of the industry and understanding I should find in Hamburgh. These, however, are the labours of sea-faring men; and such are the dangers of the waters, that sailors, who speaking of them as a class, are far from being the most intelligent, exert very sagacious means to guard against these dangers. The apparent width of the Elbe is great; but the bed of the navigable channel is comparatively small: buoys therefore have been placed, and distinguished by colour and numbering, to mark out the course of the stream, which winds exceedingly.

The eye of the traveller is always caught by those objects which differ greatly from such as he has been accustomed to see; and the appearance of our pilot was to us highly original. His figure was diminutive, yet so bundled up in jackets and breeches, that it was swelled out to a very respectable bulk. His breeches, far from being small clothes, were large and loose, and had pockets, or rather paunches, at the sides, in which he put his pipe, his tobacco, his bread and cheese, and other necessaries. I suppose he wore half a dozen pair; for he unbuttoned three, with great unconcern, before us all, to come at a fourth. His face was thin, his forehead contracted, his chin peaked, his nose large, his mouth wide, his teeth black and decayed, and his eyes small and red. Having given his directions, as soon as he had leisure he dressed, or rather undressed himself, that he might look respectably before the ladies; that is, he pulled off two jackets, the first exceedingly thick and weather proof, two pair of trowsers, and his boots, which hung loose about his legs. He then appeared in a grey damask doublet, made probably from his great grandmother's holiday gown, long quartered shoes, and a pair of pewter single-tongued buckles, extravagantly large, and diamond cut. He had a gigantic kind of sleeve-button to fasten his waistband, and another of the same form but less, at his shirt collar; these, by their embossing, equalled his buckles in splendour: and in his now reduced size, he accurately resembled the wooden men cut in Dutch toys. I found amusement in studying this figure, it being the first of the kind I had seen. His language was low Dutch, but he spoke broken English; and I endeavoured to make him talk: but as he knew nothing, he could say nothing. The office of pilot frequently requires great presence of mind, activity, and courage: this man had certainly no such qualities.

Under his guidance, however, we entered the Elbe; and the shores of Holstein on the left, and Hanover on the right, began to close upon us. I know not when or how it came there, but the picture I had in my mind of Holstein, was that of one of the rude and naked countries of the North; and I felt surprise as we approached its banks to see them frequently adorned with houses built of brick, and the gable ends painted green. This, however, as I afterwards found, is by no means the general style of building in that province; but it appears that men every where take delight in having pleasant habitations on the banks of rivers. At this part of the Elbe the left hand shore had a flat and low appearance; while in Hanover we could see, not mountains, for there are none in these parts of Germany, but high lands. I know not why, but the traveller appears to have a latent expectation that every thing which he is to see, is to be unlike every thing he has seen; and is almost disappointed to find that trees are trees, and that the banks of rivers, in foreign countries, are as verdant as those of his native land. It is true, there are in reality marking differences; but these must be sought for in the minuter parts, and not in the grand features of Nature; some few and singular instances excepted.

The Elbe cannot be navigated in the dark; for the buoys and pilot marks cannot be discerned; and at twilight we cast anchor. At this the sailors did not repine; it was a necessity to which they knew they must submit; but we, impatient passengers, heard with regret that the wind blew peculiarly fresh and fair. In the middle of the night it strengthened, and opposed the tide; in consequence of which the waves rose, and the ship rolled violently. Doors flew open, boxes and bottles tumbled from their places, and there was a great clatter in the cabin. It seemed strange to be so much disturbed, having now passed the sea, and safely arrived in the river. Trifles, to which we are unaccustomed, excite surprise.

LETTER VII

The anchor was weighed as early as possible; for it was still doubtful whether we should arrive at Hamburgh before the close of day.

According to regulation, the pilot from the red buoy has a right only to proceed to a certain distance; after which another, if he be in readiness, comes on board and takes charge of the vessel. Our little man was very anxious in his hopes that a successor would not appear; and that he should have the whole profit of proceeding to Hamburgh. But he was disappointed. At the proper station his rival came; and he returned. The second pilot was no less characteristic in manner and appearance than the first; though very different. His dress, indeed, was nearly the same; but instead of the insignificance of the former, he had an assuming deportment; which, agreeing with the costume, made me imagine I was actually in company with ancient Pistol. With his pipe in his mouth, his wide, straddling gait, and his hands in his breeches' side-pockets, commanding with a kind of bluff authority, and speaking a half unintelligible jargon, the picture was almost complete. His son was with him; a young boy, the likeness and the ape of his father. The decayed state of this man's teeth, made me conjecture that smoaking might be a principal agent in producing this defect; which I afterwards found to be common among the Germans.

This man, however, had activity in his profession; and it was fortunate that he, instead of the former, was our pilot: for, in going up the river, had not he and all the crew strongly exerted themselves, we might have been run down by the sluggish neglect of a Dane; which danger we escaped with great difficulty.

As we proceeded, the appearance of the opposite shores considerably varied; we lost sight of the distant high lands in Hanover, and saw nothing but a dead and low flat; while the Holstein bank became elevated, the number of the green-ended houses increased, and the town and fortifications of Gluckstadt came in view. It is low, and we could see little of the palace of which our pilot vaunted. We discerned nothing that in the least approached magnificence; but saw many things that had a charming air of rural calm and cleanliness. These pleasing appearances became more frequent as we approached Altona; but we could not sufficiently enjoy them, for it was now once more the close of day. Being at Altona, we were glad, though surprised, to find ourselves within a gun-shot's distance of Hamburgh: but our joy on this occasion was short; for we heard, with vexation, that the gates of Hamburgh, as well of the port as of the city, were regularly shut at dusk; and that admission, even for a prince, was then impossible.

Altona, like Hamburgh, is a seaport town; and it may safely be prophesied, that at no very distant period, they will form but one place. The number of shipping at Altona, was considerable, though small, when compared to those that crowded the harbours of Hamburgh. But the appearance that catches the eye, and distinguishes these cities from all that I had before seen, was the excessive quantity of windows in the houses; the front surfaces of which are nearly one half of glass. I had remarked the upper stories of certain manufacturing houses in London, that have rows of windows in the same manner; and inquired if the houses I now saw were all manufactories? It was a question the sailors could not answer, but I afterwards found that every house was thus constructed.

About nine o'clock, we came to moorings in the river, without the harbour; exceedingly mortified at being obliged to sleep another night on board; knowing that every thing to give us a pleasant reception had been prepared by our friends on shore. Expectation is whetted by difficulty and delay: yet expectation, without these stimulants, is generally too high. We were soon to be on German ground; and Germany is one of the grand divisions of Europe; renowned for its ancient resistance to the Roman arms, and claiming in modern times, not only the destructive honours of war, but a high rank in every department of science and belles lettres; we should therefore find it peopled with the learned, the polite, and the brave. With these, and a thousand other grateful images, we appeased our impatience, and once more waited the return of day. How eager is man for the future,—how insensible to the present!—Had he the power, how would he lend wings to time, and wish his life away!

LETTER VIII

The morning came, the Captain ordered out his boat, and we had scarcely patience to descend into it with care. The fleet that had arrived had to find berths in the harbour: ships must change their stations; some to depart, others to load, or unload: the boats and barges employed seemed almost as numerous as the ships themselves: multitudes of the peasants that inhabit the banks of the Elbe, who, from necessity, are both watermen and farmers, were arriving, male and female, in their skiffs, to provision the devouring city: all was life, all was motion; and we, rowing in the midst of the scene, had our faculties wholly absorbed by the countless novelties that at once invaded them. The animation of the Elbe cannot indeed be said to equal that of the Thames: but then the objects were so different, and their appearance generally was so uncouth and boorish, that the eye was bewildered, and unable to examine them individually.

We were stopped at the entrance of the harbour by the voice of a sentinel, and questioned concerning who we were, and what our trunks contained; but this is rather a form than a scrutiny; for few ports are so free of access, or give so little trouble with respect to Custom-house duties, as that of Hamburg. The government of Hamburg, comparatively, has laid but few restraints upon trade: that is, it has practised fewer of the vices of finance, common, more or less, to all governments; which absurdly rob, by their endeavours to enrich themselves. We landed on the *Vorsetzen*, at the principal stairs of the harbour, and were immediately struck by their inconvenience: they were narrow, steep, and dangerous, especially to persons carrying luggage. The *krahnziehers*, or city porters, perceiving we were English, and unacquainted with the place, pressed their service upon us, which we eagerly enough accepted; and having landed our trunks on the quay, one of them went for a coach, and another for a car, to remove us and our effects. We intreated them to make haste, which they promised; and though they kept us waiting in vexation above half an hour, they might still be said to keep their word: as Germans, they were quick. We had indeed heard much of the inflexible phlegm of this people, but as yet we were novices in its practical effects. While we stood watching our luggage, gazed at and gazing, the appearance of those around us strange to us, and ours to them, among other things that attracted attention were two waggons, if they might so be called, that met; and though the street, speaking of Hamburg, was tolerably wide, could scarcely pass. Each was drawn by four horses, two abreast, the driver riding on the near or left hand shaft-horse; each had four wheels, and not two feet broad at the bottom, though both were uncommonly long, the axle-trees projected above a foot on each side; in short, nothing could be more ill constructed for turning and passing in narrow streets. The convenience which would have resulted from their small width, was wholly destroyed by the projecting axle-trees; the rope harness was so long, and the horses drew at such a distance from each other, as at once to employ the space of drawing abreast, and what was nearly sufficient to have drawn lengthways. This, added to the length of the waggon, the awkwardness of the drivers, and the lazy unconcern with which they sat and looked, when they had embarrassed each other, before they determined how they would act, combining and harmonizing with other appearances around us, immediately gave birth to much surmise and meditation on national character. It was heightened too by the contents of one of the waggons, which was loaded with the filth and ordure of the city, as offensive almost to the sight as to the smell. Let us not, however, be too hasty in our conclusions, the detail of facts as they arise will best explain the real state of things: individually they may mislead, but collected and compared, they must elucidate.

It is true the next I have to relate is of the unfavourable kind. Three of the *krahnziehers* harnessed themselves to the car that drew our luggage; the distance they had to take it might be six or seven hundred yards, and a porter in London would willingly have done the whole work for three shillings; but their demand was twelve. It is true three of them thought proper to employ themselves, and they rendered that which might have been easy and expeditious, laborious and slow. Neither was their demand complied with; one third was abated: but then they supposed themselves paid no more than their due, and were dissatisfied that strangers were not taxed higher. It is said indeed, and I suppose truly, that throughout Germany labour is no where so extravagantly paid as in Hamburg: but a comparative estimate of the rate of labour is much wanted; for it is a subject on which there are many and gross mistakes. In proportion as the inhabitants of the country are ignorant, labour is supposed to be cheap: the very reverse is generally the truth.

To Mr. Freeman,

Bath.

Sir, I had once the pleasure of receiving a very humane and sensible letter from you on the part of my father. After the character he has given of you, I do not wonder at it. Benevolence and wisdom frequently are, and ought always to be united. I am now to address you on his behalf. He informs me he is indebted to you to the amount of ten pounds, which was lent to him in necessity, and which I assure you is remembered by him with gratitude: it is an affair, that if I am not mistaken, does honour both to you and him. He is very anxious to have you satisfied that you shall not suffer for your generosity. I have it not in my power without great inconvenience to discharge the debt just at present, though it is a burthen which I wish to take from my father. I shall be enabled within this year, that is, at the beginning of next November, to pay it. I am secretary to a society which allows me that sum; and which, if you will accept of my note, or a draft payable at that time, shall be appropriated to this use. I shall be glad if you will favor me with a line respecting the affair, and after begging you will accept my most sincere thanks for the obligations I owe you on my father's account, take the liberty to subscribe myself, &c.

January 9, 1779.

RIDGE ROAD BERKELEY, CALIF.

To Mr. Richard Hughes.

Barnstaple.

Sir, I shall execute with pleasure any little commands you will please to favour me with, and beg you will not suppose it any obligation. I have enquired concerning a first singer, but hear of none except Mr. Cubit. I have not applied to him, because I am told he has been with you before, and that he seldoms visits one company twice. If you want a capricious hoyden, who values herself upon her character and virtue, yet walks about the town in men's clothes, with a long stride, and a fierce cocked hat; who has more spirits, and as many antics as an ape or a tumbler; who is a coquet this minute, and a prude the next; raps out a great oath now, and anon reads you a lecture upon propriety and decorum; talks *to* herself, *at* herself, *of* herself, and never for five minutes together upon any other subject; who affects the girl, and whose wrinkles are as apparent as her vanity; who yet does every manager she is with, considerable service, by the singularity of her character, and the free airs she gives herself among the men; who on the stage, has considerable merit in breeches' parts, coquets, etc., but who will be Wall and Moonshine, or haunt you both sleeping and waking; in short, if you want a person who is sentimental, dissipated, reserved, obliging, talkative, sullen, laughing, pouting, and all in less time than I could copy this period: who has many indications of strong sense, and more of absolute insanity: whose heart would direct her to do right, but whose vanity will not permit her: I say, if such a person pleases you, then take Mrs. H——. If you suspect me of pique or ill-nature while I have been painting this picture, you wrong me. I have not, nor is it probable I ever should again have, occasion to associate with Mrs. H——. If she should say it were a bad likeness, I will mend the copy when she mends the original. We have a new afterpiece of Mr. Sheridan's coming out this evening, 'The Critic,' from which we expect great things. Pray give my best respects to Mrs. Hughes, and believe me to be sincerely yours.

T. H.

Oct. 30th, 1779.

To Mr. Holcroft.

My dear Father, I am glad the trifle I sent came safe to hand. Mr. Freeman's receipt is sufficient. You did not mention whether Mr. Freeman still continues your friend. I wish you would be kind enough to let me know whether you have all your garden ground, and your bed of asparagus still, and what you chiefly depend on for your livelihood. Let me beg of you not to be unhappy. When you can no longer make up your payments, give up your all and come to me. I have told you frequently, and I cannot repeat it too often, I will never see you want. I am afraid you think the little I have hitherto done for you an obligation: I think I discover it in your letters. Let me intreat you, do not consider it in this light. You cherished me in infancy, and I should be very wicked to see you perish in age: you loved me then, and I love and reverence you now. I will shew you how sincere I am in my professions, the moment I have it in my power. I am exceedingly concerned for my poor mother's afflictions, I hope she endures them with patience and fortitude, which alone can alleviate and make them lighter. I was not at home when your friends from Bath called, I should have been happy to have seen them, but they never came again. I hope you bear the burthen of old age cheerfully: nothing but indifference to the accidents of life can make them supportable. Life itself is to the wisest, happiest, and longest lived, short, uncertain, and chequered with good and evil; a kind of dream that ends in a profound sleep. You are travelling towards the grave, and I am following you very fast, nay, possibly may finish the journey before you; but let us not be unhappy on that account: we shall rest from our labours, while our sons and daughters in numberless succeeding generations shall toil in the same steps, have the same hopes and disappointments, and sink at last into the same forgetfulness. Life is an April day; if we are impatient and out of humour, it is overcast with tempests, clouds, and rain; but if we bound our desires and are cheerful, sunshine and serenity prevail. Mrs. Holcroft and the three little ones are all well, as are all friends, who frequently inquire after you. You would be delighted with the children, especially the boy, who is a fine little fellow, reads well, and is learning French and Latin.

To Mr. Holcroft.

King's Mead Square, Bath.

My dear Father, I take great pleasure in hearing of your welfare, and that you are not likely to become unsettled again, which, if I had not a house to invite you to, would give me great pain to reflect on, more especially at your time of life. I cannot tell you how much I respect Mr. Freeman, he certainly must be a very benevolent, worthy man, and I beg you will assure him from me that he shall be certain not to lose the least part of the sum he has lent you: and that I am ready to give him my notes, if he pleases to accept of them, for the payment at such stated periods, as I find myself able to pay them at. Your property in your garden, and your own integrity, dear Sir, are sufficient security; but I would willingly remove every burthen from your shoulders, as well as give Mr. Freeman every certainty in my power. I am every day more esteemed, and I believe, if I have life and health, there is little doubt of my success. I hope, Sir, you will not think me rude in cautioning you not to be too eager in increasing your stock; as by having more affairs on your hands than your small capital can supply, you may easily lose the whole; besides that you bring a degree of trouble and anxiety on your mind that your health cannot now support perhaps. I am exceedingly glad to hear that my mother is better. We are all in good health, our relations dine with us on Sunday, and we always speak of you. Mr. Marsac is not arrived. My comedy is to be played next season. God bless you both, and make you happy. I am, dear father, etc.

March 31st.

To Fulke Greville, Esq.

Sir, Before I proceed to any other subject, permit me to assure you that I not only think myself greatly honoured by your correspondence, but greatly obliged by your remarks, and more especially by the candour and liberality with which they are made. Indeed, Sir, these sensations have made too powerful an impression to be soon, or easily forgotten. Your ideas of consistency, however I may have failed, agree entirely with mine; for which reason, whenever you find absurdities or inconsistencies, I shall be glad if you will freely point them out. Your objection to the Two Knights is well founded. I will make Sir Harry, a Lord, or Sir Hornet, a Mr. ——. Vandervelt is in the same predicament. A large fortune, and the illiterate manners of Turnbull, are sufficiently improbable, unless what Osborne says, when he draws his character in the first act, reconciles it to truth. I think your hint, however, a good one, and worth attending to. If any phrases, words, or other alterations of that nature, occur to you in reading, I beg you will not scruple to write them on the blank leaf, being convinced that you have too much candour to take offence if I should happen to differ with you occasionally. If you understand that Sir Hornet sends the Turnbulls to his nephew's house as a residence, I have erred in expressing myself, and must correct. The last thing you have noticed I confess affects me a good deal. I thought I had contrived the plot so as to keep the audience in suspense relative to the real character of Osborne; if I have failed in this the error is a capital one indeed. It is true I could not make Osborne a rascal so palpably as to take away all probability of the contrary, because the mind would have been too much shocked at the want of poetical justice in the denouement; the point to be hit was that perplexity which must arise in the mind on seeing a worthy person likely to be betrayed by an unworthy one; but yet to preserve a possibility of his salvation by having a possibility of your suspicions of the supposed unworthy one ill founded. Now to certain minds who are intimately in the mechanical secret of plot and catastrophe, &c. I hardly know how this is to be effected. You, Sir, know that a comedy must end happily, because critics have made it an inevitable rule. You see as you proceed there is no way of doing this, but by making a certain character (Osborne for instance,) not what he appears to be: you foresee, therefore, this will happen, and your concern for the distress of another vanishes. But in what labyrinth shall the poet bewilder you, Sir, who are possessed of this clue. If the whole audience see as far as you, Sir, my play loses half its merit.

The work in question was to be a comedy, the auditors were to laugh; wit, humour, variety of character, of manners, of incident, were absolute requisites for a good comedy, and as entirely so as instruction and reformation from the fable and moral. The poet's attention must, therefore, inevitably be divided; he must bestow a part on each. If the catastrophe of my play is not more moral, more forcible, and more affecting, than that of any late production, it is worse than any of them, because the plot has greater capabilities, but the nature of the work would not permit it to be as much so as if it had had but one whole and undivided intention, that is, as if it had been a Tragedy. Do not imagine, Sir, that I am seized with the irritability of authorship; whenever I am chagrined it will be at myself for committing errors, not at others for telling me of them. I am afraid there is truth in your objection, though I confess I have been told by some readers they were entirely at a loss concerning the catastrophe till it happened: but it is evident they either said false, or were less discerning than you. Continue, Sir, to tell me truth. They will not flatter me at the Theatre. I will retrieve my errors where I can. I am concerned, however, Sir, at giving you the labour of writing, you will be in town soon; or at Petersham, I shall be proud to wait on you; you will give me your opinion with greater ease: I find already it will be of much service to me, and I repeat, I think myself greatly honoured, and indebted to that philanthropy which could prompt you so cheerfully to the present undertaking.

I am, Sir, &c.

September 4th.

To Fulke Greville, Esq.

Sir, I have this moment received and read your last letter: your attention to me is not only an honour to me, but to yourself, Sir; it expresses the anxiety of a generous mind. I continue to think that your suggestion of Osborne's gratitude is a very happy improvement, and as such have endeavoured to give it all the expression and force I could from the mouth of Osborne. As to Sir Harry, he appears to me to be so overflowing with passion, that is, the turn is so sudden and unexpected, and he is so affected with Osborne's friendship and virtue in disguise, and at the hideous danger he had just escaped, that, if I feel right, he *cannot* speak, except in exclamation. The difficulty of making impassioned characters say neither too little nor too much is, as you observe, exceedingly great: and the plot frequently obliges the author to say too much; but it never fails in some degree to offend. I confess, Sir, you almost terrify me about the loss of Melissa's fortune, but I have no remedy; the reason is what I gave you in our last conversation. Mr. Nicholson says, were it not done, he confesses he would not do it; and yet, as it is at present managed, the effect is such that he can scarcely wish it undone; nor does he seem to think there is much risk in it. He approved your before-mentioned hint concerning Osborne's gratitude, exceedingly, and thought it very happy. I don't know how enough to thank you for your kind offers concerning the prologue; but Mr. Nicholson is at present about one, and had begun it before I received your letter; how far it may succeed in mine or Mr. Harris's opinion, I cannot yet predict; but I am under no disagreeable concern on that subject, because I know Mr. Nicholson's candour and good sense so well as to be certain, should it not chance to be happy, he will not suffer the least chagrin; not to mention, Sir, that I should be exceedingly sorry again to subject your performance to the caprice, or ill taste, of others, to which I myself, in this business, am entirely subjected. I have not yet seen Mr. Henderson: he was out of town.

I am, &c.

T. H.

To the same.

Sir, I am very much concerned at not knowing where or which way to remit the copy of the comedy to you, being ignorant of where you are, or where this may find you. I went on Tuesday with it into Somerset Street, but found the house entirely shut up. The trouble you have taken in reading and advising, demands every attention from me. It is to be played on Saturday the 13th. If you come to town, or can instruct me how to send the comedy to you, I shall be happy. I assure you, Sir, you can scarcely conjecture the trouble and chagrin attending things of this nature: there have been three epilogues written before there was one to please the speaker; and at this instant, I am not certain of finding any person to speak the prologue. Mr. Henderson said he could not please himself in it, and therefore declined it; and Mr. Lee Lewis, to whom it was afterwards given, who fancies himself a wit and a critic, does not find opportunities enough of regaling his acquaintance in the upper gallery; whether he will or will not speak it, is yet to be determined. There have been various alterations made in the play, and a very considerable one relative to the loss of Melissa's fortune, though your objection is not entirely obviated. I have written a speech for Sir Harry, on the effects of gaming, as consonant to the ideas you hinted as I could; and I believe it will have a charming effect. Your turn too for the denouement is exceedingly happy. I can only add, Sir, that I think myself exceedingly obliged to you for these favours, and shall take the earliest opportunity when you are in town, with your permission, of thanking you in person.

I am, Sir, &c.

To the same.

Sir, I am exceedingly happy that you do not suspect me of ingratitude: indeed, Sir, I should detest myself had I, by my own neglect, treated you with the least disrespect. It would have been a symptom not only of an inflated, silly mind, but of a bad heart also. I repeat this, Sir, because I assure you I was very uneasy till the receipt of your obliging letter removed my doubts. I cannot help again observing to you, Sir, that the approbation of people of known worth and undoubted abilities is very flattering; and I hope there will be nothing wrong or indelicate in saying that I feel myself peculiarly happy and elevated at having gained the esteem of Mr. and Mrs. Greville; and I am certain I shall neglect no opportunity of endeavouring to improve a friendship so honourable to me, and, at one period of my life, so seemingly incompatible. I know, Sir, the most effectual mode of accomplishing this will be to do my duty in society, and assiduously to cultivate such talents as accident or nature has bestowed upon me; and this, Sir, is my most serious intention. Respecting the play, I, Sir, was never satisfied with making Sir Harry lose his sister's fortune; besides that I find it is an incident in the tragedy of the Gamester, where, as the hero does not survive the dishonour, it is very proper and happy. However, as few are sufficiently refined to feel properly on this occasion, it has a good stage effect. You can hardly conceive how great the effect of the denouement was on the first night, the whole house seemed taken by surprise; and Osborne's generous account of the reason of his conduct greatly heightened, or rather gave a complete finish to their pleasure. There is another speech, which was written in consequence of some hints I received from conversing with you, which I think one of the best conceived in the whole play. It is Sir Harry's soliloquy in the fourth act, after Melissa has put her fortune in his hands. I very much approve what you are pleased to term the niceties of verbal criticism. An exact and well regulated machine depends as much, if not more, upon small things, as great; but still there must be vast labour and precision indeed, if no particle of dust insinuates itself among the cogs and wheels; however, when such is discovered, it would be folly not to brush it away. The epilogue I wrote, and it has a good effect in speaking. The curtailings have some of them been suggested at rehearsals by the performers, and some were my own, but the greatest part were Mr. Harris's. I dislike Sir Harry's squeezing Clara's hand, as much as you can do, I assure you, Sir, it was the insertion of the actors: and I chose rather to submit to that, and many other things I disapproved, than to appear obstinate or opinionated. Mrs. Holcroft desires me to assure you, Sir, she is exceedingly obliged by the kind mention you have made of her, and only wishes it were possible to have an opportunity of expressing her gratitude in actions both to you and Mrs. Greville: but this she despairs of.

I am, Sir, &c.

Oct. 28.

To Mr. Freeman.

Bath.

To a heart like mine, addicted, both by principle and constitution, to the glowing emotions of friendship, the philanthropy and warmth of sentiment so conspicuous in your letters, and particularly in your last, are very acceptable. And though I have not leisure to answer you so fully as I wish, nor opportunity to return those many kindnesses you do me, yet to be totally silent would be ungrateful. Let me therefore return you my most sincere thanks for all your favours, particularly for those done to my father: believe me, Sir, they shall never be forgotten. You are pleased to style yourself my friend, and I am proud of the appellation: the friendship of good men is not to be obtained upon slight and trivial terms: they know not only their own worth, but that the merits or demerits of those to whom they apply that serious and respectful word, are in a great measure reflected back upon themselves; and this makes them cautious. For my own part, Sir, small as my consequence is in this world, nothing but a thorough conviction of the goodness of a man's heart, could make me accept him for my friend. I am convinced you think in this like me, and I esteem your friendship, Sir, and the friendship of men like you too highly ever to wilfully make myself unworthy of it. Men who feel the dignity of virtue are too proud to be vicious. Excuse this, Sir, I only mean to assure you I will endeavour to equal the good opinion you are pleased to entertain of me, and not to write my own eulogy.

To Mr. Freeman.

Dear Sir, I received yours of the 25th in due course, and have forborne to answer it till now, because I had not money to pay any part of the account before; as soon as I go out to-day I shall pay ten pounds in part to Mr. Ellis, and hope to pay as much more in a few weeks; should you think this too tardy, be kind enough to hint as much, and I will endeavour to quicken my motions. Had I any means of conveyance, I would send you a book just published (by me) in French and English, very curious,—'Memoires de Voltaire écrits par lui-même.' If you will be kind enough in your next to inform me who in London sends you parcels oftenest, I can take occasion now and then to send you such trifles as I have any concern in. We complain in London of literary envy among literary men, and often with reason; but our men of letters are far behind those of France in that particular; parties there are as high among the learned, as here among politicians. Their passions are sudden, their wit keen, and their tongues imprudent; all these must have exercise, and as they dare not, like us, talk of beheading prime ministers, tell kings they are fools, and regulate the affairs of nations; they are all judges of wit, taste, poetry, and the belles lettres; and much in the same proportion as we are of politics: that is to say, there are a thousand who affirm and dogmatize, for one who discriminates and judges with temperance and taste. Their authors of the present century, who have been famous, are most of them dead or old, and they themselves say they have little hopes from any of the rising generation: but this is a common-place complaint of all ages, and I have no doubt is without foundation now as heretofore. Notwithstanding their universal pretensions to dispute and decide in works of wit and taste, the common people are very ignorant and ill-educated, insomuch that you will see, in the best streets of Paris, the inscriptions on the signs frequently misspelt; which is matter of astonishment to an Englishman, who seldom sees such a thing even on a village chandler's shop sign. I have written the above sketch in obedience to a wish expressed in your last; it is hasty and slight, for I am pressed at present for time, as indeed I generally am. My father is at present in Manchester; but he has taken a cottage in Cheshire, whither he and his wife are going in a few days. In his last he desired me to give his kindest love and sincerest thanks to you and your family, for all your kindness and goodness to him; he likewise wishes to know who is Mr. F——'s successor, and if it is necessary he should come to Bath at the expiration of his lease. A line when you have leisure, Sir, will be very acceptable to your sincere friend, and obliged humble servant,

T. H.

To Mr. Professor Dugald Stewart.

Dear Sir, I am ashamed of myself, I have treated you with seeming disrespect, by neglecting to answer your letter. This is a thing I should be ashamed of with any person, and especially with one who I believe deserves the best esteem of the best men. Hear what I can urge in mitigation, and I hope to obtain your pardon. Your letter arrived just at the moment when my opera of the Noble Peasant was in rehearsal; and I exceedingly hurried and teazed, not only with attending every day at the theatre, but with alterations, writing new songs, new scenes, making retrenchments, &c. &c. to suit the circumstances of introducing this performer, leaving out that, and so on; by which you will readily conjecture I was not idle: add to which the necessity of supplying printers with copy of Les Veillêes du Chateau, which I am translating. I even began this letter yesterday, but was cut short at the word *teazed* in the last paragraph, *par un impertinent*, and was obliged to defer the subject till this morning. My defence is ended in which I even plead guilty, but hope you will find lenity not ill-bestowed. Mr. de Bonneville has been several months at Evreux. I wrote letter after letter, and received no answer, till at last I grew very seriously uneasy. My letters lay at Paris for him; he is returned, has written, and I am recovered of my fears. I believe, Sir, you know how deeply I am interested in whatever concerns Monsieur de Bonneville. At present, or rather at the moment he wrote, he was severely afflicted with the toothache; but this, though a terrible *evil* while it *lasts*, is not I hope a *lasting evil.* I shall transcribe your kind expressions concerning him in my next, for which give me leave to thank you: I assure you they gave me pleasure, yes, Sir, great pleasure. My delay has had one good effect; had I written sooner I could not have told you where he was, or if any where. I received his letter on Thursday last, shall write in a few days, and would advise you, Sir, to do likewise: your letter will be sure to reach him if you direct to him, 'Chez Monsieur Barrois le jeune Libraire Rue Hurepaix à Paris.' You are kind enough to say, Sir, you will call on me when you come to London. I have a house and table, Sir; and such as they are, if you will do me the honor of making them your own, while you stay, be it short or long, I shall remember the favor: this is said in plain and simple sincerity, and not in compliment. If you should see Mr. Robertson, junior, pray present my kind respects.

I am, &c.

T. H.

To Madame de Genlis.

I HAVE received your favor, Madam, and am happy to find the books came safe to hand. As to the retrenchments you are pleased to notice, I will not pretend to justify either my own false delicacy, or that of my nation; but I can affirm, that be it false or true, it exists, and that to an English reader, I have done the book a service, and no injury. A person of your genius, Madam, need not appeal to the approbation of journalists (I speak generally); however, if that were any consolation, I can likewise plead their support on this very subject, as you will see if you will please to read the Critical Review for February last; but I would rather have given *you* satisfaction, Madam, than fifty Reviewers. You may well imagine, Madam, I acted for the good of the work, according to the best of my judgment, but I will by no means presume that judgment infallible.—Permit me, Madam, to relate a short story.—A certain young nobleman was remarkable for the elegance of his dress, the symmetry of his person, and the refinement of his manners. The old ladies admired him, the young ladies loved him, and even the handsomest among the men envied him. He was the chief inventor of modes, the leader of fashions, and the arbiter of taste and tailors: above all, he was remarkable for a fine head of hair. Proud of his power, and conscious of his abilities, his ambition was insatiable. One day, while waiting for his hair-dresser, he happened by some odd accident to be turning over the leaves of a folio, in which he saw engravings of Eastern habits—he burst into a laugh.—What strange figures, cried he! how little do they understand of grace and elegance! were I among them, I would soon teach them better. Full of this idea, and urged by a thirst of still superior fame, he determined to take a voyage to China, in order to begin by humanizing and converting that vast empire to the principles of good taste. Arrived at Pekin, and being a master of his art, his first endeavour was to gain the suffrages of the fair sex: to effect this, he assailed, and hoped to captivate the daughter of a Mandarine, acknowledged to be the greatest beauty in all Pekin, and, as her admirers daily swore, in all the world. Much depended on a first impression, and this he knew: he therefore pared his nails and powdered his hair, and some add (perhaps maliciously) painted his cheeks. Full of the remembrance of former celebrity, and elate with the consciousness of present perfection, he walked up to the glass, admired the image it reflected, and with the step of ease and self-approbation, called for his palanquin and proceeded on his visit. Thus prepossessed, I need not describe his surprise and chagrin, when instead of meeting the approbation he thought so certain, he heard the beauteous Chinese, though struck with his fine form (for proportion must ever please) find fault with that European art—that taste, which he had held so irresistible: the smart short cut of his clothes suffered a thousand ridiculous comparisons; and his frizzed and powdered hair, so bushy and so full, afforded endless laughter. A circumstantial detail is needless. The

European, when he beheld the Chinese in their own country, and in great numbers, did not find their fashions so absurd as he thought them in an engraving. He fell desperately in love with the Mandarine's daughter, soon consented to cut off his fine hair, except a single lock, to let his nails grow, and wear a long vest; for without such condescension he found it impossible to win the affection of his mistress—that is, he translated himself into Chinese. Truth and nature are the same in all countries, but the mode of decoration varies in each.—This I hope, Madam, will be a sufficient apology for any occasional liberties I may have taken with your very estimable work; and which, notwithstanding, I believe few people think more highly of than I do, because few have studied its numerous excellences with such minute attention. There is a new edition now in the press, and I shed tears daily over the proofs as I read. I shall receive the favor of your 'Theatre d'Education,' with the respect and thanks such a present, coming from such a person, deserves.

I am, Madam, &c.
T. H.

To Fulke Greville, Esq.

Dear Sir, When I returned from Blackheath, I found your kind note, in which you speak in that mild and true spirit of philosophy, which is worthy of a liberal and philosophic mind. Proof respecting the subject in question (*Instinct*) is not to be had. To me the difficulties seem less to suppose the actions of all animals the consequence of reflection, than to suppose them *blind* impulse. I care not a farthing, whether my opinion be right or wrong; but while it *is* my opinion, however weak or absurd it may be, I will never pretend to a conviction I do not feel: and in this I am sure to meet your approbation, because a contrary conduct would be contemptible. A hen that has chickens, rakes up a barley-corn on a dunghill and stands clucking over it till her brood come round her. I could as soon suppose this an action of instinct, viz. an action without an intention, for that is what I understand by the word instinct; I repeat, I could as soon suppose the hen acted from instinct, and without any idea passing in her mind, as I could at seeing a tomtit carry moss into the hollow of a tree, for the safety of itself and young: the action is much more complicated in the one case, than in the other, but I do not see that it warrants me to conclude the tomtit is acting without any intention. My mind revolts at the idea of a bird selecting a hole just capacious enough to creep into, remarking in what tree that hole happens to be, flying away and looking round for materials to make its nest, placing those materials in a certain form, leaving its mate to watch, and give notice if an enemy approach, and going through a rational and well connected system, without rationality, and without meaning. It seems to me much less difficult to suppose the bird has a greater capacity than I am habituated to attribute to birds, or that it learns to do these things from seeing others of the same species with which it lives in society do the like. Pray Sir, do me the justice to believe, that I mean to give all this as mere opinion, and that I am superior to dogmatizing. The fact you mention of the squirrel, may, as you say, Sir, if I am not mistaken, afford deductions for either side of the question. The first thing I should wish to inquire into would be, whether the squirrel had never been in company with other squirrels that had the like habits; and, if that were proved against me, I should next inquire, whether a young squirrel that had never been in company with any other squirrel did, the very first time it had nuts given it, go and seek for a corner to hide them, and if even this extraordinary thing were to happen, I should still be much more inclined to attribute it to the fears and cunning of the animal, than to suppose it went and came and knew nothing about the matter; for so, I think, acting from instinct or without intention, implies. Your Wilbury horses, Sir, are surely on my side of the question, and my very good friends on this occasion, or I am once more egregiously deceived. They not only *choose* to leave the heat and retire to the shade, but they moreover select that part of the shade which suits them best, that is, where they are least annoyed by flies. Just so an over-roasted cook-maid retires behind her fire-screen, and if she happens to sit down on an uneasy chair removes to another, and gives the easiest the preference. Men play on the harpsichord and talk, as men walk and talk; i.e. the thing is so familiar, it employs only a part of their attention; but give them music which is too difficult for them, that is, which employs their whole attention, and I from experience will answer for their silence. The respect due to your friendly mode of arguing, has occasioned me to do what I have a great aversion to, write a long letter. But however convinced you may be of the fallacy of my arguments, I hope I shall never give you cause to suspect the sincerity and friendship with which I am, and shall ever remain,

Your very respectful,
Humble servant,
T. H.

P.S.—I have sent you the magazine, and a volume of the Harleian manuscript, a very scarce, curious, and dear book, and hope it may afford something that will entertain. I have not got the other book: *Lord Kaimes's Sketches of Man* is the title.

To the Hon. Horace Walpole.

Sir, The politeness with which I was received on my accidental visit to Strawberry-hill, in company with Mr. Mercier, and the pleasure I felt not only in viewing so rare a collection of the works of art, but in the very kind manner in which they were shewn, will not easily be forgotten. As a small testimony of the truth of this, I then projected, and having received them from the binders, now take the liberty to send you copies of such dramatic works of mine, as have been already played and published, which I beg you to accept, not as a task imposed upon you to read them, nor yet with an expectation of praise, but as an acknowledgement of as much thankfulness as I dare express. I have also inclosed a copy of a manuscript comedy, for which I can give no better reason, than that though every motive of delicacy would make me avoid laying you under the least restraint, yet it may happen that the perusal of it may afford you an hour's amusement, which is the best return I am at present able to make for the attention with which you were pleased to treat me, and the invitation you gave me to revisit Strawberry-hill in a more favourable season.

I am, Sir,
Your very respectful,
Humble servant,
T. H.

ANSWER.

To Mr. Holcroft.

Berkley Square, Nov. 28th, 1788.

The civilities, Sir, which you are pleased to say you received from me at Strawberry-hill, were no more than were due to any gentleman, and certainly did not deserve such acknowledgement as you have made; and I should be ashamed of your thanking me so much, if the agreeable manner in which you have greatly overpaid them by the present of your works, did not make me easily swallow my shame, though it will not dispense me from assuring you how much I am obliged to you. I shall read them with pleasure as soon as I am settled in town. Just at present, I live between town and country, and should not have leisure but to read them by snatches. It is for this reason, that if you are not in haste for it, I shall beg leave to keep your manuscript comedy, till I can peruse it with proper attention. If you should want it soon, I will return it, and ask for it again, for it would be unjust to the merit of your works to run through them too rapidly.

I am, Sir,
Your obliged, and
Obedient humble servant,
H. Walpole.

To Mr. Holcroft, sen.

Aug. 31*st*, 1791.

My dear Father, I have received both your kind letters, and hope you will excuse my not having answered you sooner, my delay having been occasioned by the intense application which I am obliged to pay to a work I am now writing. I imagine it will be printed about Christmas, and you shall receive an early copy. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to hear of your good health. I am convinced of the efficacy of sea-bathing, and am glad you are near enough to the sea to enjoy the benefit of it. Remember, my dear father, what I repeated to you, when I had last the happiness of your company. Keep your mind alive; exercise every part of your body, fingers, joints, and muscles; endeavour to infuse spirit and vigour into them, and depend upon it you will be surprised at the effects which will be produced. We die piece-meal, by falling into habits of apathy and neglect; and by supposing that debility and inactivity are the inevitable consequences of age. The mind becomes weary of action; it loses its desires, and the body sinks into listlessness, palsy, and universal decay. This I am persuaded is the error of a false supposition, that death is inevitable. Not that I would have you understand I myself think I shall not die: but I very sincerely think, when I do die, it will be of ignorance, and of the disease I have just mentioned; accidents excepted.

You inquire, dear Sir, whether I am married again. I cannot say what miracles may happen in the world; but I really think I have had marriage enough for one man. The woman whom I could truly esteem is not easily to be found; and, if the discovery were made, it would be strange if she were wholly disengaged. Your grandchildren are all in good health, and inquire after you very affectionately. Mrs. Colles and family are well, she dined with us the Sunday before last. With respect to affairs, I am sorry for your sake, my dear father, that I am not so rich as I could wish. The only remedy is strict economy, and hard labour; both of which conditions I am obliged severely to comply with: but, far from being discontented; to be able to comply with them, to be rid of the false notions that fix felicity in the enjoyment of superfluous trifles, which none of us want, and to have a mind industrious, active, and delighting to produce, these things are to me happiness, which may be almost called supreme. I shall for some months be exceedingly short of money; but you shall nevertheless hear from me, at the usual time. Pray remember me kindly to Mrs. Holcroft, and assure yourself that I shall always remain

Your dutiful and
Affectionate Son,
T. H.

From Mr. Shield.

Turin, September 22nd, 1791.

Dear Holcroft, * * * * * * My health, since I left England, one day excepted, has been extremely good; but passing the Alps in the manner I did, was too much for me. I thought it degraded the race of men too much to suffer two of them to carry me in a sedan over this immense mountain: in consequence of which we had mules; and after riding about one mile, reflection told me that I was shortening the life of an animal, by obliging it to carry me up and down so many precipices; and as I saw women walk it, I was resolved to do the same, for I was then in possession of the temper of the animal which I led, and would not yield to the intreaties of my fellow travellers to remount. I was so much exhausted when I arrived at Laneburg, that I threw myself upon the bed: soon after which, dinner was served up in the same room; but my appetite had entirely left me through fatigue: my heart was good, but my strength failed me. However, after waiting for two hours for some very indifferent tea, it revived me a little, and I got into the coach, and was entirely recovered by the time we reached Turin. A man needs no common share of that inestimable quality which you so eminently possess (fortitude) to travel through the South of France and Savoy, with only a dozen words of the language. I thought change of scene would prove the best medicine for me, and I seem to have been right in my prognostications, for I find myself in the full possession of my faculties, and am determined to exert myself in my profession. A very accomplished Russian is my chief companion. But the greatest original of our voiture party is a Chinese, of a small stature, but of a capacious memory: he speaks the French, Italian, Spanish, German, Dutch, Russian, and Latin languages, so as to astonish the natives and students of the above. His character is so uncommon that, were you to draw him for the English stage, he must reside in London before the audience would acknowledge your character to be natural: most people like him, for the only indignity he has yet met with is his being taken for my valet, from his attention to me.

Your's truly,

Wm. Shield.

P.S.—I cannot view the beautiful scenes which at present surround me, without recollecting the strokes of Milton's pencil in his sublime picture of Paradise Lost.

To Mr. Shield.

London, Oct. 11, 1791.

Dear Shield, You cannot easily imagine the pleasure which your letter gave me. The passions, hopes, and alarms of the heart are necessarily excited in behalf of those for whom it has an affection by distance, and by its ignorance of the good or ill health, happiness or misfortune of those it loves. I heard of you at Lyons, and for the moment was satisfied. I knew from the numbers who cross the Alps, that there would be little or no danger in traversing the tremendous Mount Cenis; yet I was anxiously desirous to hear you had passed it in safety. I have accompanied you in imagination, and looked down from its summit on the surrounding nations. Fanny supposes that, being placed there, the eye has a survey, as it were, of all Europe, though in reality its powers are too feeble to see distinctly and accurately at a few yards' distance; but fancy delights in these deceptions, nor can the scenery be other than sublime and astonishing. You are at present in what, perhaps, more than any other, may properly be called the country of contradictions. The noble works of art, of sculpture, of painting, and the monuments of architecture, which are to be met with in almost every city of Italy, form a surprising contrast to the ignorance, poverty, sloth, and present depravity of its inhabitants. Men who, by the baneful influence of priesthood and bad government, have, from the first of mankind, become almost the lowest. Sunk in ignorance, deprived of energy, destitute of all noble emulation, we ask with amazement, how could a people like this produce works so magnificent; or tower, as they have done, above the rest of mankind? You are sensible, dear Shield, I now speak of them as a nation; there are, no doubt, individuals among them who still possess those powers, and that genius, of which the herd of their fellow citizens is deprived. They only wait a more happy moment, and a return of times more fortunate, to become all that they have been, and I hope much more. I need not tell you the infinite pleasure it would give me, could I, at this moment, transport myself to the palace in which you lodge, for such no doubt it is, and accompany you in all your peregrinations: I have a very earnest desire to see Rome, that queen of cities, and take a view of all her treasures, which as I am told, are so immense and multifarious, as presently to satiate the most inquisitive mind.

Do not forget, dear Shield, to fix your attention on the various works of Michael Angelo: in painting, sculpture, and architecture, I am persuaded he was the first of modern artists. Nor must Raphael escape your notice. Rome, I am told, is the only place on earth to view his pictures, for all the best of them are there. I shall ask you a thousand questions concerning them on your return, and of the effect they produced upon you. The remains of ancient architecture: the Pantheon, Trajan's Pillar, the Tower of St. Angelo, &c. &c. you will certainly not forget. I should indeed prefer fixing my attention on a select few of the grandest objects, to that of dividing it into too many parts, and thus rendering it without efficacy. No passage in your letter gave me so much pleasure as that in which you tell me you are in full possession of your faculties, *which you are determined to exert.*—The determination is well worthy of a mind like your's, Shield, which to possess, and not to employ, is, in my opinion, the true sin against the Holy Ghost; it is unpardonable. Familiarized as your mind at present is to harmony, and stored with musical ideas, what can be so desirable for the world, or so delightful to yourself, as to arrange those stores, to pour them forth, and to dig the gold from the mountain where, while it lies buried, it is worthless. Not that any accusation of the kind can be brought against you, yet, Shield, distance will authorise friendship in speaking a truth which false modesty unjustly forbids us to repeat *vivâ voce.* Your works are already an honour to your nation and your art; and had you not been under the malignant influence of absurd prejudices, they would have been infinitely more honourable. We are at present all, more or less, under similar influences, and obliged to obey the dictates of necessity. I hope, however, that you will be less so in future than heretofore; and the end of my present very severe labours is to free myself from them if possible. There needed not any caution relative to the newspapers; I believe you are too generally beloved to be in danger of attack; but should illiberality or envy shew their fangs, be certain, you will not want a defender. Forgive me, dear Shield, for not transcribing this letter myself; my brain is exceedingly busy, and not a little fatigued; you will see on what, when you return to England. I am obliged to employ every moment in that severe labour which is requisite to form a consistent, efficacious, and excellent whole;

whether the work I am writing will be such must be left to the proof, but such at least I must endeavour to make it, and I hope my efforts will not be unsuccessful. All good, all happiness, all pleasure, be with you wherever you go. T. H.

To Mr. Godwin.

July 20th, 1797.

It was my intention to write, for I feel a kind of vacuity of heart, when I am deprived of the intercourse of my accustomed friends; but as I cannot write to them all, and as we have many friends in common, I think there are few whom you may not safely assure on my part, that they have their turn in my thoughts. I deferred this pleasant duty, however, till I had seen your mother, whom I thought it right and respectful to visit. My coming occasioned some little alarm; the Major, Mrs. Harwood, and Fanny, accompanied me; we were seen from the windows as we came up to the gate. I had my spectacles on, and your sister-in-law ran to inform your mother that yourself and Mrs. Godwin were arrived. The old lady stood in the portico; the young ones advanced; there was an anxious curiosity in their countenances, and your sister said, addressing herself to me, 'I think I know you, Sir.' I scarcely knew what to reply: imagination had winged her and myself up to London, where I supposed, some years ago, I might have seen her at your lodgings; taking it for granted she was a relation: but as I did not answer, Major Harwood relieved our embarrassment by announcing my name. The change of countenance, perhaps, could not have fully persuaded her that my face was actually yours, yet she seemed rather to trust to her hopes, than to her recollection; and these being disappointed, an immediate blank took possession of her features, and the rising joy was damped. Your mother, however, very kindly invited us in, and gave us all the good things she had, that could administer to our immediate pleasures. The expectations which Major Harwood had raised by his description of your mother were not entirely answered. She was neither so alert, so commanding, nor so animated, as he and Ann had described. I think her very rapidly on the decline: having quitted her farming business I have no doubt myself but that her faculties will be impaired much faster than they would have been had she continued to exert them. Her memory is good, her conceptions, speaking comparatively, are clear, and her strength considerable. I have seen more of the county of Norfolk, than of its inhabitants; of which county I remark, that, to the best of my recollection, it contains more churches, more flints, more turkeys, more turnips, more wheat, more cultivation, more commons, more cross-roads, and from that token probably more inhabitants, than any county I ever visited. It has another distinguishing and paradoxical feature, if what I hear be true: it is said to be more illiterate than any other parts of England, and yet I doubt if any county of like extent have produced an equal number of famous men. This is, however, merely a conjecture made, not from examination, but from memory. As it is necessary for me to bathe, I shall immediately depart for Yarmouth, and pass through Norwich, which I have not yet seen. If you, or Mrs. Godwin, or both, can but prevail on yourself or selves to endure the fatigue of writing to me, I hope I need not use many words to convince you of the pleasure it will give me: and be it understood that this letter is addressed to you both, whatever the direction on the back may affirm to the contrary. Professions are almost impertinent, and yet I am almost tempted to profess to you how sincerely and seriously I am interested in your happiness, but as I am sure my words would ill describe my thoughts, I shall forbear. Pray inform me, sweet lady, in what state is your novel? And on what, courteous Sir, are *you* employed? Though I am idle myself, I cannot endure that anybody else should be so. Direct to me at the Post-Office, Yarmouth.

To Mr. Holcroft.

December 11th, 1794.

Sir, Were I not writing to Mr. Holcroft, I should think it needful to apologize for my abrupt self-introduction to you in London, and the liberty I now take in addressing you: but I trust you will not deem me impertinent, nor expect any professions to convince you of the esteem and admiration I have for your character. These sentiments induced me to visit you in your late unjust confinement, to be anxious for your safety, and sincerely to rejoice that you are now restored to your friends, and your extensive circle of usefulness. You may perhaps recollect the scheme[1] of which I gave you an imperfect outline; I much desired your opinion and advice on the subject; but your mind being then much engaged on its peculiar situation, I forbore to intrude the subject. Hoping you may now be happily settled at your rightful home, and believing you would be happy to assist me by advice, as well as enforce by precept any virtuous intention, I would engage your thoughts to our projected plan of establishing a genuine system of property. America presents many advantages to the accomplishment of this scheme—the easy rate at which land may be purchased, is not the least important: yet we are not determined on emigration. Principle, not plan, is our object. A friend has suggested that the plan is practicable in some of the uncultivated parts of Wales. I recollect your expressing a desire that we might form such a society without leaving the kingdom. As we wish to consult all who may render our efforts more serviceable to the cause of truth and virtue, we should be happy if in some unemployed hour, you would consider the subject, and impart to us any objection which may occur peculiar to the scheme of emigration. From the writings of William Godwin and yourself, our minds have been illuminated, we wish our actions to be guided by the same superior abilities; perhaps when together, you may bestow some thoughts to our advantage. To him, and your friend Nicholson, I would request the remembrance of an admirer. Long may they continue to instruct and amend mankind! If we could practise our scheme in this kingdom, it would save much expense, perhaps danger, and at the same time be more agreeable to our private inclinations; but the probability of being obnoxious to Government, and subject to tythes, are in our opinions serious objections. I forbear to make any remark on the late trials, or formally to congratulate you on your acquittal. I hope the spirit of enquiry will be excited to advantage; perhaps you would rather have had your trial proceeded in; though the Court authority prevented your *speaking*, they cannot prevent you from *printing* your injured case. I am anxious to see your appeal on the subject.

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[1] The Pantisocrasy Scheme.

When you address your charming daughter, (Mrs. C——, of Exeter), whom I saw with you, be good enough to make my remembrance. I wonder not at your drawing the charming character of Anna St. Ives, having so fair an original.

Robert Lovell.

No. 14, *Old Market, Bristol,* 1794.

From Mr. Dermody.

London, June 15*th*, 1796.

Sir, From the universal celebrity of your talents, and the liberal spirit which breathes through all your productions, I am, though a stranger, emboldened to request your superior guidance in the paths of literature. Very little used to authorship as a trade, inexperienced in the polity of booksellers, and even unacquainted with the city itself, it would, I presume, be no dishonourable employment to direct a wandering muse, and you alone, Sir, are the person I conceive (from general benevolence) best adapted to that task both by affability and experience. Without these two qualifications, you could not have written Alwyn, which, next to Fielding's work, contains the most affecting and sportive scenes that ever adorned that (of which you have given so fine a definition) a novel. I have lately borne a commission in the army, and am, at present, under the patronage of a most learned and amiable nobleman: however, being formerly taught to believe that I had some talents, it is disagreeable to be unemployed with every faculty on the stretch for exertion. By that nobleman's desire, I left a large poem, 'The Retrospect,' with a printer of eminence in Pall Mall; but was much surprised to be informed yesterday that he had embarked for Italy, and the manuscript was locked up. I have but a very rough draught of it now till he returns. Your very great dramatic eminence might be of the most material benefit by pointing out the steps proper to be taken in a line of which I have been ever enamoured. If you deign to direct a short reply to this strange intrusion, I shall have the honour to lay a few pieces of poetry (which fortunately are correctly copied) before your judgment—meanwhile

I am, Sir, with great respect,
Your obedient Servant,
THOMAS DERMODY.

No. 30, Oxendon-Street, Haymarket.

From the Marquis Dampierre.

Liege, 6 Xbre l'an 1r de la Républic.

DEAR HOLCROFT, I charge my dear friend, the young Mergées, my countermen, to tell you, that I never forgot our old friendship, he'll tell you my profession of faith, upon the Revolution. He'll bring you a relation of the victories of the French, and you'll see my part in it. I have the honour to conduct the liberty lads in the way of the victory.

Adieu, dearer among the dear,

H. DAMPIERRE.[1]
Maj. G. of the French Republic.

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[1] The Marquis de Dampierre, with whom I was very intimate at Paris in 1783. He received a mortal wound on the 8th of May, 1793, of which he died on the 10th, when he was Commander in Chief, and which battle the French gained. T. H.

From Madame de Genlis.[1]

Sir, With pleasure, as well as gratitude, I acknowledge the receipt of the translation you were pleased to send me, which came to hand prior to your letter, and consequently before I could well go to make my claim. I have not yet had time to peruse it, but by the preface I am surprised to find you have omitted some incidents in the tales of *Eglantine* and of *Pamela*, which in this country have created universal interest. Even the journalists, from whom I had little reason to expect mercy, owing to the severity with which they are treated in my works, have with one accord praised the expunged passages. I mention this to you with the less reserve, because those very passages are not of my own invention, which may be seen by referring to the notes relative to them. I have besides given the place of Mad^{me} Busca's residence; a number of persons have been to see her, and have satisfied themselves of the truth of my statement. Woe be to the false delicacy which is unable to endure a recital honourable to humanity, when made with an appeal to the feelings powerful enough to command tears! However, Sir, be persuaded that I entertain a lively sense of the very great attention you have otherwise shewn me, as well as of the handsome, and by far too flattering encomiums you have passed on my feeble productions. My motives are pure, and I have courage enough to tell truths likely to prove beneficial:—my writings will corrupt no one;—this is the only merit I am anxious to claim for myself; and indeed in our days it is sufficiently rare to satisfy its possessor.

There is now in the press a new edition of the *Théatre d'Education*, to which I have added another volume, consisting of pieces taken from the Scriptures. This new edition will appear in the course of May next, and I beg your permission, Sir, to forward you a copy, as a small token of my gratitude, and of the sentiments with which I have the honour to be, Sir, your very humble and very obedient servant,

Ducrest Genlis.

Belle Chassee, *22nd Feb.* 1785.

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[1] This letter is a translation from the French.

FINIS

LIBER AMORIS

OR

THE NEW PYGMALION

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

This book was published in a 12mo volume of 192 pages in 1823. The title-page ran as follows: 'Liber Amoris; or, The New Pygmalion. London: Printed for John Hunt, 22. Old Bond Street, by C. H. Reynell, 45. Broad St., Golden Sq^{re} 1823,' and contained a vignette (engraved by S. W. Reynolds) of the picture referred to in the first Conversation. The first edition was reprinted *verbatim*, with a facsimile of the title-page, in the *Bibliotheca Curiosa* (8vo, ? 1884), and again in 1893 (8vo) by Elkin Matthews and John Lane, with an Introduction by Richard Le Gallienne. In the following year (1894) another edition (small 4to, 'privately printed') was published with the following title: 'Liber Amoris or The New Pygmalion by William Hazlitt with additional matter now printed for the first time from the original manuscripts, with an introduction by Richard Le Gallienne.' The first edition (1823) is here reprinted.

ADVERTISEMENT

The circumstances, an outline of which is given in these pages, happened a very short time ago to a native of North Britain, who left his own country early in life, in consequence of political animosities and an ill-advised connection in marriage. It was some years after that he formed the fatal attachment which is the subject of the following narrative. The whole was transcribed very carefully with his own hand, a little before he set out for the Continent in hopes of benefiting by a change of scene, but he died soon after in the Netherlands—it is supposed, of disappointment preying on a sickly frame and morbid state of mind. It was his wish that what had been his strongest feeling while living, should be preserved in this shape when he was no more.—It has been suggested to the friend, into whose hands the manuscript was entrusted, that many things (particularly in the *Conversations* in the First Part) either childish or redundant, might have been omitted; but a promise was given that not a word should be altered, and the pledge was held sacred. The names and circumstances are so far disguised, it is presumed, as to prevent any consequences resulting from the publication, farther than the amusement or sympathy of the reader.

LIBER AMORIS

PART I

THE PICTURE

H. Oh! is it you? I had something to shew you—I have got a picture here. Do you know any one it's like?

S. No, Sir.

H. Don't you think it like yourself?

S. No: it's much handsomer than I can pretend to be.

H. That's because you don't see yourself with the same eyes that others do. *I* don't think it handsomer, and the expression is hardly so fine as your's sometimes is.

S. Now you flatter me. Besides, the complexion is fair, and mine is dark.

H. Thine is pale and beautiful, my love, not dark! But if your colour were a little heightened, and you wore the same dress, and your hair were let down over your shoulders, as it is here, it might be taken for a picture of you. Look here, only see how like it is. The forehead is like, with that little obstinate protrusion in the middle; the eyebrows are like, and the eyes are just like your's, when you look up and say—'No—never!'

S. What then, do I always say—'No—never!' when I look up?

H. I don't know about that—I never heard you say so but once; but that was once too often for my peace. It was when you told me, 'you could never be mine.' Ah! if you are never to be mine, I shall not long be myself. I cannot go on as I am. My faculties leave me: I think of nothing, I have no feeling about any thing but thee: thy sweet image has taken possession of me, haunts me, and will drive me to distraction. Yet I could almost wish to go mad for thy sake: for then I might fancy that I had thy love in return, which I cannot live without!

S. Do not, I beg, talk in that manner, but tell me what this is a picture of.

H. I hardly know; but it is a very small and delicate copy (painted in oil on a gold ground) of some fine old Italian picture, Guido's or Raphael's, but I think Raphael's. Some say it is a Madona; others call it a Magdalen, and say you may distinguish the tear upon the cheek, though no tear is there. But it seems to me more like Raphael's St. Cecilia, 'with looks commercing with the skies,' than anything else.—See, Sarah, how beautiful it is! Ah! dear girl, these are the ideas I have cherished in my heart, and in my brain; and I never found any thing to realise them on earth till I met with thee, my love! While thou didst seem sensible of my kindness, I was but too happy: but now thou hast cruelly cast me off.

S. You have no reason to say so: you are the same to me as ever.

H. That is, nothing. You are to me everything, and I am nothing to you. Is it not too true?

S. No.

H. Then kiss me, my sweetest. Oh! could you see your face now—your mouth full of suppressed sensibility, your downcast eyes, the soft blush upon that cheek, you would not say the picture is not like because it is too handsome, or because you want complexion. Thou art heavenly-fair, my love—like her from whom the picture was taken—the idol of the painter's heart, as thou art of mine! Shall I make a drawing of it, altering the dress a little, to shew you how like it is?

S. As you please.—

THE INVITATION

H. But I am afraid I tire you with this prosing description of the French character and abuse of the English? You know there is but one subject on which I should ever wish to talk, if you would let me.

S. I must say, you don't seem to have a very high opinion of this country.

H. Yes, it is the place that gave you birth.

S. Do you like the French women better than the English?

H. No: though they have finer eyes, talk better, and are better made. But they none of them look like you. I like the Italian women I have seen, much better than the French: they have darker eyes, darker hair, and the accents of their native tongue are much richer and more melodious. But I will give you a better account of them when I come back from Italy, if you would like to hear it.

S. I should much. It is for that I have sometimes had a wish for travelling abroad, to understand something of the manners and characters of different people.

H. My sweet girl! I will give you the best account I can—unless you would rather go and judge for yourself.

S. I cannot.

H. Yes, you shall go with me, and you shall go *with honour*—you know what I mean.

S. You know it is not in your power to take me so.

H. But it soon may: and if you would consent to bear me company, I would swear never to think of an Italian woman while I am abroad, nor of an English one after I return home. Thou art to me more than thy whole sex.

S. I require no such sacrifices.

H. Is that what you thought I meant by *sacrifices* last night? But sacrifices are no sacrifices when they are repaid a thousand fold.

S. I have no way of doing it.

H. You have not the will.—

S. I must go now.

H. Stay, and hear me a little. I shall soon be where I can no more hear thy voice, far distant from her I love, to see what change of climate and bright skies will do for a sad heart. I shall perhaps see thee no more, but I shall still think of thee the same as ever—I shall say to myself, 'Where is she now?—what is she doing?' But I shall hardly wish you to think of me, unless you could do so more favourably than I am afraid you will. Ah! dearest creature, I shall be 'far distant from you,' as you once said of another, but you will not think of me as of him, 'with the sincerest affection.' The smallest share of thy tenderness would make me blest; but couldst thou ever love me as thou didst him, I should feel like a God! My face would change to a different expression: my whole form would undergo alteration. I was getting well, I was growing young in the sweet proofs of your friendship: you see how I droop and wither under your displeasure! Thou art divine, my love, and canst make me either more or less than mortal. Indeed I am thy creature, thy slave—I only wish to live for your sake—I would gladly die for you—

S. That would give me no pleasure. But indeed you greatly overrate my power.

H. Your power over me is that of sovereign grace and beauty. When I am near thee, nothing can harm me. Thou art an angel of light, shadowing me with thy softness. But when I let go thy hand, I stagger on a precipice: out of thy sight the world is dark to me and comfortless. There is no breathing out of this house: the air of Italy will stifle me. Go with me and lighten it. I can know no pleasure away from thee—

> 'But I will come again, my love,
> An' it were ten thousand mile!'

THE MESSAGE

S. Mrs. E—— has called for the book, Sir.

H. Oh! it is there. Let her wait a minute or two. I see this is a busy-day with you. How beautiful your arms look in those short sleeves!

S. I do not like to wear them.

H. Then that is because you are merciful, and would spare frail mortals who might die with gazing.

S. I have no power to kill.

H. You have, you have—Your charms are irresistible as your will is inexorable. I wish I could see you always thus. But I would have no one else see you so. I am jealous of all eyes but my own. I should almost like you to wear a veil, and to be muffled up from head to foot; but even if you were, and not a glimpse of you could be seen, it would be to no purpose—you would only have to move, and you would be admired as the most graceful creature in the world. You smile—Well, if you were to be won by fine speeches—

S. You could supply them!

H. It is however no laughing matter with me; thy beauty kills me daily, and I shall think of nothing but thy charms, till the last word trembles on my tongue, and that will be thy name, my love—the name of my Infelice! You will live by that name, you rogue, fifty years after you are dead. Don't you thank me for that?

S. I have no such ambition, Sir. But Mrs. E—— is waiting.

H. She is not in love, like me. You look so handsome to-day, I cannot let you go. You have got a colour.

S. But you say I look best when I am pale.

H. When you are pale, I think so; but when you have a colour, I then think you still more beautiful. It is you that I admire; and whatever you are, I like best. I like you as Miss L——, I should like you still more as Mrs. ——. I once thought you were half inclined to be a prude, and I admired you as a 'pensive nun, devout and pure.' I now think you are more than half a coquet, and I like you for your roguery. The truth is, I am in love with you, my angel ; and whatever you are, is to me the perfection of thy sex. I care not what thou art, while thou art still thyself. Smile but so, and turn my heart to what shape you please!

S. I am afraid, Sir, Mrs. E—— will think you have forgotten her.

H. I had, my charmer. But go, and make her a sweet apology, all graceful as thou art. One kiss! Ah! ought I not to think myself the happiest of men?

THE FLAGEOLET

H. Where have you been, my love!

S. I have been down to see my aunt, Sir.

H. And I hope she has been giving you good advice.

S. I did not go to ask her opinion about any thing.

H. And yet you seem anxious and agitated. You appear pale and dejected, as if your refusal of me had touched your own breast with pity. Cruel girl! you look at this moment heavenly-soft, saint-like, or resemble some graceful marble statue, in the moon's pale ray! Sadness only heightens the elegance of your features. How can I escape from you, when every new occasion, even your cruelty and scorn, brings out some new charm. Nay, your rejection of me, by the way in which you do it, is only a new link added to my chain. Raise those down-cast eyes, bend as if an angel stooped, and kiss me. . . . Ah! enchanting little trembler! if such is thy sweetness where thou dost not love, what must thy love have been? I cannot think how any man, having the heart of one, could go and leave it.

S. No one did, that I know of.

H. Yes, you told me yourself he left you (though he liked you, and though he knew—Oh! gracious God!—that you loved him) he left you because 'the pride of birth would not permit a union.'—For myself, I would leave a throne to ascend to the heaven of thy charms. I live but for thee, here—I only wish to live again to pass all eternity with thee. But even in another world, I suppose you would turn from me to seek him out who scorned you here.

S. If the proud scorn us here, in that place we shall all be equal.

H. Do not look so—do not talk so—unless you would drive me mad. I could worship you at this moment. Can I witness such perfection, and bear to think I have lost you for ever? Oh! let me hope! You see you can mould me as you like. You can lead me by the hand, like a little child; and with you my way would be like a little child's:—you could strew flowers in my path, and pour new life and hope into me. I should then indeed hail the return of spring with joy, could I indulge the faintest hope—would you but let me try to please you!

S. Nothing can alter my resolution, Sir.

H. Will you go and leave me so?

S. It is late, and my father will be getting impatient at my stopping so long.

H. You know he has nothing to fear for you—it is poor I that am alone in danger. But I wanted to ask about buying you a flageolet. Could I see that which you have? If it is a pretty one, it would hardly be worth while; but if it isn't, I thought of bespeaking an ivory one for you. Can't you bring up your own to shew me.

S. Not to-night, Sir.

H. I wish you could.

S. I cannot—but I will in the morning.

H. Whatever you determine, I must submit to. Good night, and bless thee!

[*The next morning,* S. *brought up the tea-kettle as usual; and looking towards the tea-tray, she said, 'Oh! I see my sister has forgot the tea-pot.' It was not there, sure enough; and tripping down stairs, she came up in a minute, with the tea-pot in one hand, and the flageolet in the other, balanced so sweetly and gracefully. It would have been awkward to have brought up the flageolet in the tea-tray, and she could not have well gone down again on purpose to fetch it. Something, therefore, was to be omitted as an excuse. Exquisite witch! But do I love her the less dearly for it? I cannot.*]

THE CONFESSION

H. You say you cannot love. Is there not a prior attachment in the case? Was there any one else that you *did* like?

S. Yes, there was another.

H. Ah! I thought as much. Is it long ago then?

S. It is two years, Sir.

H. And has time made no alteration? Or do you still see him sometimes?

S. No, Sir! But he is one to whom I feel the sincerest affection, and ever shall, though he is far distant.

H. And did he return your regard?

S. I had every reason to think so.

H. What then broke off your intimacy?

S. It was the pride of birth, Sir, that would not permit him to think of a union.

H. Was he a young man of rank, then?

S. His connections were high.

H. And did he never attempt to persuade you to any other step?

S. No—he had too great a regard for me.

H. Tell me, my angel, how was it? Was he so very handsome? Or was it the fineness of his manners?

S. It was more his manner: but I can't tell how it was. It was chiefly my own fault. I was foolish to suppose he could ever think seriously of me. But he used to make me read with him—and I used to be with him a good deal, though not much neither—and I found my affections entangled before I was aware of it.

H. And did your mother and family know of it?

S. No—I have never told any one but you; nor I should not have mentioned it now, but I thought it might give you some satisfaction.

H. Why did he go at last?

S. We thought it better to part.

H. And do you correspond?

S. No, Sir. But perhaps I may see him again some time or other, though it will be only in the way of friendship.

H. My God! what a heart is thine, to live for years upon that bare hope!

S. I did not wish to live always, Sir—I wished to die for a long time after, till I thought it not right; and since then I have endeavoured to be as resigned as I can.

H. And do you think the impression will never wear out?

S. Not if I can judge from my feelings hitherto. It is now sometime since,—and I find no difference.

H. May God for ever bless you! How can I thank you for your condescension in letting me know your sweet sentiments? You have changed my esteem into adoration.—Never can I harbour a thought of ill in thee again.

S. Indeed, Sir, I wish for your good opinion and your friendship.

H. And can you return them?

S. Yes.

H. And nothing more?

S. No, Sir.

H. You are an angel, and I will spend my life, if you will let me, in paying you the homage that my heart feels towards you.

THE QUARREL

H. You are angry with me?

S. Have I not reason?

H. I hope you have; for I would give the world to believe my suspicions unjust. But, oh! my God! after what I have thought of you and felt towards you, as little less than an angel, to have but a doubt cross my mind for an instant that you were what I dare not name—a common lodging-house decoy, a kissing convenience, that your lips were as common as the stairs—

S. Let me go, Sir!

H. Nay—prove to me that you are not so, and I will fall down and worship you. You were the only creature that ever seemed to love me; and to have my hopes, and all my fondness for you, thus turned to a mockery—it is too much! Tell me why you have deceived me, and singled me out as your victim?

S. I never have, Sir. I always said I could not love.

H. There is a difference between love and making me a laughing-stock. Yet what else could be the meaning of your little sister's running out to you, and saying 'He thought I did not see him!' when I had followed you into the other room? Is it a joke upon me that I make free with you? Or is not the joke rather against *her* sister, unless you make my courtship of you a jest to the whole house? Indeed I do not well see how you can come and stay with me as you do, by the hour together, and day after day, as openly as you do, unless you give it some such turn with your family. Or do you deceive them as well as me?

S. I deceive no one, Sir. But my sister Betsey was always watching and listening when Mr. M—— was courting my eldest sister, till he was obliged to complain of it.

H. That I can understand, but not the other. You may remember, when your servant Maria looked in and found you sitting in my lap one day, and I was afraid she might tell your mother, you said 'You did not care, for you had no secrets from your mother.' This seemed to me odd at the time, but I thought no more of it, till other things brought it to my mind. Am I to suppose, then, that you are acting a part, a vile part, all this time, and that you come up here, and stay as long as I like, that you sit on my knee and put your arms round my neck, and feed me with kisses, and let me take other liberties with you, and that for a year together; and that you do all this not out of love, or liking, or regard, but go through your regular task, like some young witch, without one natural feeling, to shew your cleverness, and get a few presents out of me, and go down into the kitchen to make a fine laugh of it? There is something monstrous in it, that I cannot believe of you.

S. Sir, you have no right to harass my feelings in the manner you do. I have never made a jest of you to anyone, but always felt and expressed the greatest esteem for you. You have no ground for complaint in my conduct; and I cannot help what Betsey or others do. I have always been consistent from the first. I told you my regard could amount to no more than friendship.

H. Nay, Sarah, it was more than half a year before I knew that there was an insurmountable obstacle in the way. You say your regard is merely friendship, and that you are sorry I have ever felt anything more for you. Yet the first time I ever asked you, you let me kiss you; the first time I ever saw you, as you went out of the room, you turned full round at the door, with that inimitable grace with which you do everything, and fixed your eyes full upon me, as much as to say, 'Is he caught?'—that very week you sat upon my knee, twined your arms round me, caressed me with every mark of tenderness consistent with modesty; and I have not got much farther since. Now if you did all this with me, a perfect stranger to you, and without any particular liking to me, must I not conclude you do so as a matter of course with everyone?—Or, if you do not do so with others, it was because you took a liking to me for some reason or other.

S. It was gratitude, Sir, for different obligations.

H. If you mean by obligations the presents I made you, I had given you none the first day I came. You do not consider yourself *obliged* to everyone who asks you for a kiss?

S. No, Sir.

H. I should not have thought anything of it in anyone but you. But you seemed so reserved and modest, so soft, so timid, you spoke so low, you looked so innocent—I thought it impossible you could deceive me. Whatever favors you granted must proceed from pure regard. No betrothed virgin ever gave the object of her choice kisses, caresses more modest or more bewitching than those you have given me a thousand and a thousand times. Could I have thought I should ever live to believe them an inhuman mockery of one who had the sincerest regard for you? Do you think they will not now turn to rank poison in my veins, and kill me, soul and body? You say it is friendship—but if this is friendship, I'll forswear love. Ah! Sarah! it must be something more or less than friendship. If your caresses are sincere, they shew fondness—if they are not, I must be more than indifferent to you. Indeed you once let some words drop, as if I were out of the question in such matters, and you could trifle with me with impunity. Yet you complain at other times that no one ever took such liberties with you as I have done. I remember once in particular your saying, as you went out at the door in anger—'I had an attachment before, but that person never attempted anything of the kind.' Good God! How did I dwell on that word *before*, thinking it implied an attachment to me also; but you have since disclaimed any such meaning. You say you have never professed more than esteem. Yet once, when you were sitting in your old place, on my knee, embracing and fondly embraced, and I asked you if you could not love, you made answer, 'I could easily say so, whether I did or not—YOU SHOULD JUDGE BY MY ACTIONS!' And another time, when you were in the same posture, and I reproached you with indifference, you replied in these words, 'Do I SEEM INDIFFERENT?' Was I to blame after this to indulge my passion for the loveliest of her sex? Or what can I think?

S. I am no prude, Sir.

H. Yet you might be taken for one. So your mother said, 'It was hard if you might not indulge in a little levity.' She has strange notions of levity. But levity, my dear, is quite out of character in you. Your ordinary walk is as if you were performing some religious ceremony: you come up to my table of a morning, when you merely bring in the tea-things, as if you were advancing to the altar. You move in minuet-time: you measure every step, as if you were afraid of offending in the smallest things. I never hear your approach on the stairs, but by a sort of hushed silence. When you enter the room, the Graces wait on you, and Love waves round your person in gentle undulations, breathing balm into the soul! By Heaven, you are an angel! You look like one at this instant! Do I not adore you—and have I merited this return?

S. I have repeatedly answered that question. You sit and fancy things out of your own head, and then lay them to my charge. There is not a word of truth in your suspicions.

H. Did I not overhear the conversation down-stairs last night, to which you were a party? Shall I repeat it?

S. I had rather not hear it!

H. Or what am I to think of this story of the footman?

S. It is false, Sir, I never did anything of the sort.

H. Nay, when I told your mother I wished she wouldn't * * * * * * * * * (as I heard she did) she said 'Oh, there's nothing in that, for Sarah very often * * * * * *,' and your doing so before company, is only a trifling addition to the sport.

S. I'll call my mother, Sir, and she shall contradict you.

H. Then she'll contradict herself. But did not you boast you were 'very persevering in your resistance to gay young men,' and had been 'several times obliged to ring the bell?' Did you always ring it? Or did you get into these dilemmas that made it necessary, merely by the demureness of your looks and ways? Or had nothing else passed? Or have you two characters, one that you palm off upon me, and another, your natural one, that you resume when you get out of the room, like an actress who throws aside her artificial part behind the scenes? Did you not, when I was courting you on the staircase the first night Mr. C—— came, beg me to desist, for if the new lodger heard us, he'd take you for a light character? Was that all? Were you only afraid of being *taken* for a light character? Oh! Sarah!

S. I'll stay and hear this no longer.

H. Yes, one word more. Did you not love another?

S. Yes, and ever shall most sincerely.

H. Then, *that* is my only hope. If you could feel this sentiment for him, you cannot be what you seem to me of late. But there is another thing I had to say—be what you will, I love you to distraction! You are the only woman that ever made me think she loved me, and that feeling was so new to me, and so delicious, that it 'will never from my heart.' Thou wert to me a little tender flower, blooming in the wilderness of my life; and though thou should'st turn out a weed, I'll not fling thee from me, while I can help it. Wert thou all that I dread to think—wert thou a wretched wanderer in the street, covered with rags, disease, and infamy, I'd clasp thee to my bosom, and live and die with thee, my love. Kiss me, thou little sorceress!

S. NEVER!

H. Then go: but remember I cannot live without you—nor I will not.

THE RECONCILIATION

H. I HAVE then lost your friendship?

S. Nothing tends more to alienate friendship than insult.

H. The words I uttered hurt me more than they did you.

S. It was not words merely, but actions as well.

H. Nothing I can say or do can ever alter my fondness for you—Ah, Sarah! I am unworthy of your love: I hardly dare ask for your pity; but oh! save me—save me from your scorn: I cannot bear it—it withers me like lightning.

S. I bear no malice, Sir; but my brother, who would scorn to tell a lie for his sister, can bear witness for me that there was no truth in what you were told.

H. I believe it; or there is no truth in woman. It is enough for me to know that you do not return my regard; it would be too much for me to think that you did not deserve it. But cannot you forgive the agony of the moment?

S. I can forgive; but it is not easy to forget some things!

H. Nay, my sweet Sarah (frown if you will, I can bear your resentment for my ill behaviour, it is only your scorn and indifference that harrow up my soul)—but I was going to ask, if you had been engaged to be married to any one, and the day was fixed, and he had heard what I did, whether he could have felt any true regard for the character of his bride, his wife, if he had not been hurt and alarmed as I was?

S. I believe, actual contracts of marriage have sometimes been broken off by unjust suspicions.

H. Or had it been your old friend, what do you think he would have said in my case?

S. He would never have listened to anything of the sort.

H. He had greater reasons for confidence than I have. But it is your repeated cruel rejection of me that drives me almost to madness. Tell me, love, is there not, besides your attachment to him, a repugnance to me?

S. No, none whatever.

H. I fear there is an original dislike, which no efforts of mine can overcome.

S. It is not *you*—it is my feelings with respect to another, which are unalterable.

H. And yet you have no hope of ever being his? And yet you accuse me of being romantic in my sentiments.

S. I have indeed long ceased to hope; but yet I sometimes hope against hope.

H. My love! were it in my power, thy hopes should be fulfilled to-morrow. Next to my own, there is nothing that could give me so much satisfaction as to see thine realized! Do I not love thee, when I can feel such an interest in thy love for another? It was that which first wedded my very soul to you. I would give worlds for a share in a heart so rich in pure affection!

S. And yet I did not tell you of the circumstance to raise myself in your opinion.

H. You are a sublime little thing! And yet, as you have no prospects there, I cannot help thinking, the best thing would be to do as I have said.

S. I would never marry a man I did not love beyond all the world.

H. I should be satisfied with less than that—with the love, or regard, or whatever you call it, you have shown me before marriage, if that has only been sincere. You would hardly like me less afterwards.

S. Endearments would, I should think, increase regard, where there was love beforehand; but that is not exactly my case.

H. But I think you would be happier than you are at present. You take pleasure in my conversation, and you say you have an esteem for me; and it is upon this, after the honeymoon, that marriage chiefly turns.

S. Do you think there is no pleasure in a single life?

H. Do you mean on account of its liberty?

S. No, but I feel that forced duty is no duty. I have high ideas of the married state!

H. Higher than of the maiden state?

S. I understand you, Sir.

H. I meant nothing; but you have sometimes spoken of any serious attachment as a tie upon you. It is not that you prefer flirting with 'gay young men' to becoming a mere dull domestic wife?

S. You have no right to throw out such insinuations: for though I am but a tradesman's daughter, I have as nice a sense of honour as anyone can have.

H. Talk of a tradesman's daughter! you would ennoble any family, thou glorious girl, by true nobility of mind.

S. Oh! Sir, you flatter me. I know my own inferiority to most.

H. To none; there is no one above thee, man nor woman either. You are above your situation, which is not fit for you.

S. I am contented with my lot, and do my duty as cheerfully as I can.

H. Have you not told me your spirits grow worse every year?

S. Not on that account: but some disappointments are hard to bear up against.

H. If you talk about that, you'll unman me. But tell me, my love,—I have thought of it as something that might account for some circumstances; that is, as a mere possibility. But tell me, there was not a likeness between me and your old lover that struck you at first sight? Was there?

S. No, Sir, none.

H. Well, I didn't think it likely there should.

S. But there was a likeness.

H. To whom?

S. To that little image! (*looking intently on a small bronze figure of Buonaparte on the mantlepiece*).

H. What, do you mean to Buonaparte?

S. Yes, all but the nose was just like.

H. And was his figure the same?

S. He was taller!

[*I got up and gave her the image, and told her it was her's by every right that was sacred. She refused at first to take so valuable a curiosity, and said she would keep it for me. But I pressed it eagerly, and she took it. She immediately came and sat down, and put her arm round my neck, and kissed me, and I said, 'Is it not plain we are the best friends in the world, since we are always so glad to make it up?' And then I added 'How odd it was that the God of my idolatry should turn out to be like her Idol, and said it was no wonder that the same face which awed the world should conquer the sweetest creature in it!' How I loved her at that moment! Is it possible that the wretch who writes this could ever have been so blest! Heavenly delicious creature! Can I live without her? Oh! no—never—never.*

'What is this world? What asken men to have,
Now with his love, now in the cold grave,
Alone, withouten any compagnie!'

Let me but see her again! She cannot hate the man who loves her as I do.]

LETTERS TO THE SAME

Feb., 1822.

—You will scold me for this, and ask me if this is keeping my promise to mind my work. One half of it was to think of Sarah: and besides, I do not neglect my work either, I assure you. I regularly do ten pages a day, which mounts up to thirty guineas' worth a week, so that you see I should grow rich at this rate, if I could keep on so; *and I could keep on so*, if I had you with me to encourage me with your sweet smiles, and share my lot. The Berwick smacks sail twice a week, and the wind sits fair. When I think of the thousand endearing caresses that have passed between us, I do not wonder at the strong attachment that draws me to you; but I am sorry for my own want of power to please. I hear the wind sigh through the lattice, and keep repeating over and over to myself two lines of Lord Byron's Tragedy—

'So shalt thou find me ever at thy side
Here and hereafter, if the last may be.'—

applying them to thee, my love, and thinking whether I shall ever see thee again. Perhaps not—for some years at least—till both thou and I are old—and then, when all else have forsaken thee, I will creep to thee, and die in thine arms. You once made me believe I was not hated by her I loved; and for that sensation, so delicious was it, though but a mockery and a dream, I owe you more than I can ever pay. I thought to have dried up my tears for ever, the day I left you; but as I write this, they stream again. If they did not, I think my heart would burst. I walk out here of an afternoon, and hear the notes of the thrush, that come up from a sheltered valley below, welcome in the spring; but they do not melt my heart as they used: it is grown cold and dead. As you say, it will one day be colder.—Forgive what I have written above; I did not intend it: but you were once my little all, and I cannot bear the thought of having lost you for ever, I fear through my own fault. Has any one called? Do not send any letters that come. I should like you and your mother (if agreeable) to go and see Mr. Kean in Othello, and Miss Stephens in Love in a Village. If you will, I will write to Mr. T——, to send you tickets. Has Mr. P—— called? I think I must send to him for the picture to kiss and talk to. Kiss me, my best beloved. Ah! if you can never be mine, still let me be your proud and happy slave. H.

RIDGE ROA
BERKELEY, CAL

TO THE SAME

March, 1822.

—You will be glad to learn I have done my work—a volume in less than a month. This is one reason why I am better than when I came, and another is, I have had two letters from Sarah. I am pleased I have got through this job, as I was afraid I might lose reputation by it (which I can little afford to lose)—and besides, I am more anxious to do well now, as I wish you to hear me well spoken of. I walk out of an afternoon, and hear the birds sing as I told you, and think, if I had you hanging on my arm, *and that for life*, how happy I should be—happier than I ever hoped to be, or had any conception of till I knew you. '*But that can never be*'—I hear you answer in a soft, low murmur. Well, let me dream of it sometimes—I am not happy too often, except when that favourite note, the harbinger of spring, recalling the hopes of my youth, whispers thy name and peace together in my ear. I was reading something about Mr. Macready to-day, and this put me in mind of that delicious night, when I went with your mother and you to see Romeo and Juliet. Can I forget it for a moment—your sweet modest looks, your infinite propriety of behaviour, all your sweet winning ways—your hesitating about taking my arm as we came out till your mother did—your laughing about nearly losing your cloak—your stepping into the coach without my being able to make the slightest discovery—and oh! my sitting down beside you there, you whom I had loved so long, so well, and your assuring me I had not lessened your pleasure at the play by being with you, and giving me your dear hand to press in mine! I thought I was in heaven—that slender exquisitely-turned form contained my all of heaven upon earth; and as I folded you—yes, you, my own best Sarah, to my bosom, there was, as you say, *a tie between us*—you did seem to me, for those few short moments, to be mine in all truth and honour and sacredness—Oh! that we could be always so—Do not mock me, for I am a very child in love. I ought to beg pardon for behaving so ill afterwards, but I hope the *little image* made it up between us, &c.

[*To this letter I have received no answer, not a line. The rolling years of eternity will never fill up that blank. Where shall I be? What am I? Or where have I been?*]

WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF ENDYMION

I WANT a hand to guide me, an eye to cheer me, a bosom to repose on; all which I shall never have, but shall stagger into my grave, old before my time, unloved and unlovely, unless S. L. keeps her faith with me.

* * * * * * *
* * * *

—But by her dove's eyes and serpent-shape, I think she does not hate me; by her smooth forehead and her crested hair, I own I love her; by her soft looks and queen-like grace (which men might fall down and worship) I swear to live and die for her!

A PROPOSAL OF LOVE

(*Given to her in our early acquaintance*)

'Oh! if I thought it could be in a woman
(As, if it can, I will presume in you)
To feed for aye her lamp and flames of love,
To keep her constancy in plight and youth,
Outliving beauties outward with a mind
That doth renew swifter than blood decays:
Or that persuasion could but thus convince me,
That my integrity and truth to you
Might be confronted with the match and weight
Of such a winnowed purity in love—
How were I then uplifted! But, alas,
I am as true as truth's simplicity,
And simpler than the infancy of truth.'

Troilus and Cressida.

LIBER AMORIS

PART II

LETTERS TO C. P——, ESQ.

Bees-Inn.

My good Friend, Here I am in Scotland (and shall have been here three weeks, next Monday) as I may say, *on my probation.* This is a lone inn, but on a great scale, thirty miles from Edinburgh. It is situated on a rising ground (a mark for all the winds, which blow here incessantly)—there is a woody hill opposite, with a winding valley below, and the London road stretches out on either side. You may guess which way I oftenest walk. I have written two letters to S. L. and got one cold, prudish answer, beginning *Sir*, and ending *From your's truly*, with *Best respects from herself and relations.* I was going to give in, but have returned an answer, which I think is a touch-stone. I send it you on the other side to keep as a curiosity, in case she kills me by her exquisite rejoinder. I am convinced from the profound contemplations I have had on the subject here and coming along, that I am on a wrong scent. We had a famous parting-scene, a complete quarrel and then a reconciliation, in which she did beguile me of my tears, but the deuce a one did she shed. What do you think? She cajoled me out of my little Buonaparte as cleverly as possible, in manner and form following. She was shy the Saturday and Sunday (the day of my departure) so I got in dudgeon, and began to rip up grievances. I asked her how she came to admit me to such extreme familiarities, the first week I entered the house. 'If she had no particular regard for me, she must do so (or more) with everyone: if she had a liking to me from the first, why refuse me with scorn and wilfulness?' If you had seen how she flounced, and looked, and went to the door, saying 'She was obliged to me for letting her know the opinion I had always entertained of her.'—then I said, 'Sarah!' and she came back and took my hand, and fixed her eyes on the mantle-piece—(she must have been invoking her idol then—if I thought so, I could devour her, the darling—but I doubt her)—So I said 'There is one thing that has occurred to me sometimes as possible, to account for your conduct to me at first—there wasn't a likeness, was there, to your old friend?' She answered 'No, none—but there was a likeness'—I asked, to what? She said 'to that little image!' I said, 'Do you mean Buonaparte?'—She said, 'Yes, all but the nose.'—'And the figure?'—'He was taller.'—I could not stand this. So I got up and took it, and gave it her, and after some reluctance, she consented to 'keep it for me.' What will you bet me that it wasn't all a trick? I'll tell you why I suspect it, besides being fairly out of my wits about her. I had told her mother half an hour before, that I should take this image and leave it at Mrs. B.'s, for that I didn't wish to leave anything behind me that must bring me back again. Then up she comes and starts a likeness to her lover: she knew I should give it her on the spot—'No, she would keep it for me!' So I must come back for it. Whether art or nature, it is sublime. I told her I should write and tell you so, and that I parted from her, confiding, adoring!—She is beyond me, that's certain. Do go and see her, and desire her not to give my present address to a single soul, and learn if the lodging is let, and to whom. My letter to her is as follows. If she shews the least remorse at it, I'll be hanged, though it might move a stone, I modestly think. (*See before, Part I. page* 300.)

N.B.—I have begun a book of our conversations (I mean mine and the statue's) which I call LIBER AMORIS. I was detained at Stamford and found myself dull, and could hit upon no other way of employing my time so agreeably.

LETTER II

DEAR P——, Here, without loss of time, in order that I may have your opinion upon it, is little YES and NO's answer to my last.

'SIR, I should not have disregarded your injunction not to send you any more letters that might come to you, had I not promised the Gentleman who left the enclosed to forward it the earliest opportunity, as he said it was *of consequence*. Mr. P—— called the day after you left town. My mother and myself are much obliged by your kind offer of tickets to the play, but must decline accepting it. My family send their best respects, in which they are joined by

Your's, truly,

S. L.'

The deuce a bit more is there of it. If you can make anything out of it (or any body else) I 'll be hanged. You are to understand, this comes in a frank, the second I have received from her, with a name I can't make out, and she won't tell me, though I asked her, where she got franks, as also whether the lodgings were let, to neither of which a word of answer. * * * * is the name on the frank : see if you can decypher it by a Red-book. I suspect her grievously of being an arrant jilt, to say no more—yet I love her dearly. Do you know I 'm going to write to that sweet rogue presently, having a whole evening to myself in advance of my work? Now mark, before you set about your exposition of the new Apocalypse of the new Calypso, the only thing to be endured in the above letter is the date. It was written the very day after she received mine. By this she seems willing to lose no time in receiving these letters 'of such sweet breath composed.' If I thought so—but I wait for your reply. After all, what is there in her but a pretty figure, and that you can't get a word out of her? Her's is the Fabian method of making love and conquests. What do you suppose she said the night before I left her?

'H. Could you not come and live with me as a friend?

S. I don't know: and yet it would be of no use if I did, you would always be hankering after what could never be!'

I asked her if she would do so at once—the very next day? And what do you guess was her answer—'Do you think it would be prudent?' As I didn't proceed to extremities on the spot, she began to look grave, and declare off. 'Would she live with me in her own house—to be with me all day as dear friends, if nothing more, to sit and read and talk with me?'—'She would make no promises, but I should find her the same.'—'Would she go to the play with me sometimes, and let it be understood that I was paying my addresses to her?'—'She could not, as a habit—her father was rather strict, and would object.'—Now what am I to think of all this? Am I mad or a fool? Answer me to that, Master Brook! You are a philosopher.

LETTER III

Dear Friend, I ought to have written to you before; but since I received your letter, I have been in a sort of purgatory, and what is worse, I see no prospect of getting out of it. I would put an end to my torments at once; but I am as great a coward as I have been a dupe. Do you know I have not had a word of answer from her since! What can be the reason? Is she offended at my letting you know she wrote to me, or is it some new affair? I wrote to her in the tenderest, most respectful manner, poured my soul at her feet, and this is the return she makes me! Can you account for it, except on the admission of my worst doubts concerning her? Oh God! can I bear after all to think of her so, or that I am scorned and made a sport of by the creature to whom I had given my whole heart?—Thus has it been with me all my life; and so will it be to the end of it!—If you should learn anything, good or bad, tell me, I conjure you: I can bear anything but this cruel suspense. If I knew she was a mere abandoned creature, I should try to forget her; but till I do know this, nothing can tear me from her, I have drank in poison from her lips too long—alas! mine do not poison again. I sit and indulge my grief by the hour together; my weakness grows upon me; and I have no hope left, unless I could lose my senses quite. Do you know I think I should like this? To forget, ah! to forget—there would be something in that—to change to an ideot for some few years, and then to wake up a poor wretched old man, to recollect my misery as past, and die! Yet, oh! with her, only a little while ago, I had different hopes, forfeited for nothing that I know of! * * * * * * If you can give me any consolation on the subject of my tormentor, pray do. The pain I suffer wears me out daily. I write this on the supposition that Mrs. —— may still come here, and that I may be detained some weeks longer. Direct to me at the Post-office; and if I return to town directly as I fear, I will leave word for them to forward the letter to me in London—not at my old lodgings. I will not go back there: yet how can I breathe away from her? Her hatred of me must be great, since my love of her could not overcome it! I have finished the book of my conversations with her, which I told you of: if I am not mistaken, you will think it very nice reading.

Your's ever.

Have you read Sardanapalus? How like the little Greek slave, Myrrha, is to *her!*

LETTER IV

(Written in the Winter)

My good Friend, I received your letter this morning, and I kiss the rod not only with submission, but gratitude. Your reproofs of me and your defences of her are the only things that save my soul from perdition. She is my heart's idol; and believe me those words of yours applied to the dear saint—'To lip a chaste one and suppose her wanton'—were balm and rapture to me. I have *lipped her*, God knows how often, and oh! is it even possible that she is chaste, and that she has bestowed her loved 'endearments' on me (her own sweet word) out of true regard? That thought, out of the lowest depths of despair, would at any time make me strike my forehead against the stars. Could I but think the love 'honest,' I am proof against all hazards. She by her silence makes my *dark hour;* and you by your encouragements dissipate it for twenty-four hours. Another thing has brought me to life. Mrs. —— is actually on her way here about the divorce. Should this unpleasant business (which has been so long talked of) succeed, and I should become free, do you think S. L. will agree to change her name to ——? If she *will*, she *shall;* and to call her so to you, or to hear her called so by others, would be music to my ears, such as they never drank in. Do you think if she knew how I love her, my depressions and my altitudes, my wanderings and my constancy, it would not move her? She knows it all; and if she is not an *incorrigible*, she loves me, or regards me with a feeling next to love. I don't believe that any woman was ever courted more passionately than she has been by me. As Rousseau said of Madame d'Houptot (forgive the allusion) my heart has found a tongue in speaking to her, and I have talked to her the divine language of love. Yet she says, she is insensible to it. Am I to believe her or you? You—for I wish it and wish it to madness, now that I am like to be free, and to have it in my power to say to her without a possibility of suspicion, 'Sarah, will you be mine?' When I sometimes think of the time I first saw the sweet apparition, August 16, 1820, and that possibly she may be my bride before that day two years, it makes me dizzy with incredible joy and love of her. Write soon.

LETTER V

My dear Friend, I read your answer this morning with gratitude. I have felt somewhat easier since. It shewed your interest in my vexations, and also that you know nothing worse than I do. I cannot describe the weakness of mind to which she has reduced me. This state of suspense is like hanging in the air by a single thread that exhausts all your strength to keep hold of it; and yet if that fails you, you have nothing in the world else left to trust to. I am come back to Edinburgh about this cursed business, and Mrs. —— is coming from Montrose next week. How it will end, I can't say;

and don't care, except as it regards the other affair. I should, I confess, like to have it in my power to make her the offer direct and unequivocal, to see how she'd receive it. It would be worth something at any rate to see her superfine airs upon the occasion; and if she should take it into her head to turn round her sweet neck, drop her eye-lids, and say—'Yes, I will be yours!'—why then, 'treason domestic, foreign levy, nothing could touch me further.' By Heaven! I doat on her. The truth is, I never had any pleasure, like love, with any one but her. Then how can I bear to part with her? Do you know I like to think of her best in her morning-gown and mob-cap—it is so she has oftenest come into my room and enchanted me! She was once ill, pale, and had lost all her freshness. I only adored her the more for it, and fell in love with the decay of her beauty. I could devour the little witch. If she had a plague-spot on her, I could touch the infection: if she was in a burning fever, I could kiss her, and drink death as I have drank life from her lips. When I press her hand, I enjoy perfect happiness and contentment of soul. It is not what she says or what she does—it is herself that I love. To be with her is to be at peace. I have no other wish or desire. The air about her is serene, blissful; and he who breathes it is like one of the Gods! So that I can but have her with me always, I care for nothing more. I never could tire of her sweetness; I feel that I could grow to her, body and soul? My heart, my heart is her's.

LETTER VI

(*Written in May*)

Dear P——, What have I suffered since I parted with you! A raging fire is in my heart and in my brain, that never quits me. The steam-boat (which I foolishly ventured on board) seems a prison-house, a sort of spectre-ship, moving on through an infernal lake, without wind or tide, by some necromantic power—the splashing of the waves, the noise of the engine gives me no rest, night or day—no tree, no natural object varies the scene—but the abyss is before me, and all my peace lies weltering in it! I feel the eternity of punishment in this life; for I see no end of my woes. The people about me are ill, uncomfortable, wretched enough, many of them—but to-morrow or next day, they reach the place of their destination, and all will be new and delightful. To me it will be the same. I can neither escape from her, nor from myself. All is endurable where there is a limit: but I have nothing but the blackness and the fiendishness of scorn around me—mocked by her (the false one) in whom I placed my hope, and who hardens herself against me!—I believe you thought me quite gay, vain, insolent, half mad, the night I left the house—no tongue can tell the heaviness of heart I felt at that moment. No footsteps ever fell more slow, more sad than mine; for every step bore me farther from her, with whom my soul and every thought lingered. I had parted with her in anger, and each had spoken words of high disdain, not soon to be forgiven. Should I ever behold her again? Where go to live and die far from her? In her sight there was Elysium; her smile was heaven; her voice was enchantment; the air of love waved round her, breathing balm into my heart: for a little while I had sat with the Gods at their golden tables, I had tasted of all earth's bliss, 'both living and loving!' But now Paradise barred its doors against me; I was driven from her presence, where rosy blushes and delicious sighs and all soft wishes dwelt, the outcast of nature and the scoff of love! I thought of the time when I was a little happy careless child, of my father's house, of my early lessons, of my brother's picture of me when a boy, of all that had since happened to me, and of the waste of years to come—I stopped, faultered, and was going to turn back once more to make a longer truce with wretchedness and patch up a hollow league with love, when the recollection of her words—'I always told you I had no affection for you'—steeled my resolution, and I determined to proceed. You see by this she always hated me, and only played with my credulity till she could find some one to supply the place of her unalterable attachment to *the little image.* * * * * * I am a little, a very little better to-day. Would it were quietly over; and that this misshapen form (made to be mocked) were hid out of the sight of cold, sullen eyes! The people about me even take notice of my dumb despair, and pity me. What is to be done? I cannot forget *her;* and I can find no other like what *she seemed.* I should wish you to call, if you can make an excuse, and see whether or no she is quite marble—whether I may go back again at my return, and whether she will see me and talk to me sometimes as an old friend. Suppose you were to call on M—— from me, and ask him what his impression is that I ought to do. But do as you think best. Pardon, pardon.

P.S.—I send this from Scarborough, where the vessel stops for a few minutes. I scarcely know what I should have done, but for this relief to my feelings.

LETTER VII

My dear Friend, The important step is taken, and I am virtually a free man. * * * What had I better do in these circumstances? I dare not write to her, I dare not write to her father, or else I would. She has shot me through with poisoned arrows, and I think another 'winged wound' would finish me. It is a pleasant sort of balm (as you express it) she has left in my heart! One thing I agree with you in, it will remain there for ever; but yet not very long. It festers, and consumes me. If it were not for my little boy, whose face I see struck blank at the news, looking through the world for pity and meeting with contempt instead, I should soon, I fear, settle the question by my death. That recollection is the only thought that brings my wandering reason to an anchor; that stirs the smallest interest in me; or gives me fortitude to bear up against what I am doomed to feel for the *ungrateful*. Otherwise, I am dead to every thing but the sense of what I have lost. She was my life—it is gone from me, and I am grown spectral! If I find myself in a place I am acquainted with, it reminds me of her, of the way in which I thought of her,

> ——'and carved on every tree
> The soft, the fair, the inexpressive she!'

If it is a place that is new to me, it is desolate, barren of all interest; for nothing touches me but what has a reference to her. If the clock strikes, the sound jars me; a million of hours will not bring back peace to my breast. The light startles me; the darkness terrifies me. I seem falling into a pit, without a hand to help me. She has deceived me, and the earth fails from under my feet; no object in nature is substantial, real, but false and hollow, like her faith on which I built my trust. She came (I knew not how) and sat by my side and was folded in my arms, a vision of love and joy, as if she had dropped from the Heavens to bless me by some especial dispensation of a favouring Providence, and make me amends for all; and now without any fault of mine but too much fondness, she has vanished from me, and I am left to perish. My heart is torn out of me, with every feeling for which I wished to live. The whole is like a dream, an effect of enchantment; it torments me, and it drives me mad. I lie down with it; I rise up with it; and see no chance of repose. I grasp at a shadow, I try to undo the past, and weep with rage and pity over my own weakness and misery. I spared her again and again (fool that I was) thinking what she allowed from me was love, friendship, sweetness, not wantonness. How could I doubt it, looking in her face, and hearing her words, like sighs breathed from the gentlest of all bosoms? I had hopes, I had prospects to come, the flattery of something like fame, a pleasure in writing, health even would have come back with her smile—she has blighted all, turned all to poison and childish tears. Yet the barbed arrow is in my heart—I can neither endure it, nor draw it out; for with it flows my life's-blood. I had conversed too long with abstracted truth to trust myself with the immortal thoughts of love. *That S. L. might have been mine, and now never can*—these are the two sole propositions that for ever stare me in the face, and look ghastly in at my poor brain. I am in some sense proud that I can feel this dreadful passion—it gives me a kind of rank in the kingdom of love—but I could have wished it had been for an object that at least could have understood its value and pitied its excess. You say her not coming to the door when you went is a proof—yes, that her complement is at present full! That is the reason she doesn't want me there, lest I should discover the new affair—wretch that I am! Another has possession of her, oh Hell! I'm satisfied of it from her manner, which had a wanton insolence in it. Well might I run wild when I received no letters from her. I foresaw, I felt my fate. The gates of Paradise were once open to me too, and I blushed to enter but with the golden keys of love! I would die; but her lover—my love of her—ought not to die. When I am dead, who will love her as I have done? If she should be in misfortune, who will comfort her? when she is old, who will look in her face, and bless her? Would there be any harm in calling upon M——, to know confidentially if he thinks it worth my while to make her an offer the instant it is in my power? Let me have an answer, and save me, if possible, *for* her and *from* myself.

LETTER VIII

My dear Friend, Your letter raised me for a moment from the depths of despair; but not hearing from you yesterday or to-day (as I hoped) I have had a relapse. You say I want to get rid of her. I hope you are more right in your conjectures about her than in this about me. Oh no! believe it, I love her as I do my own soul; my very heart is wedded to her (be she what she may) and I would not hesitate a moment between her and 'an angel from Heaven.' I grant all you say about my self-tormenting folly: but has it been without cause? Has she not refused me again and again with a mixture of scorn and resentment, after going the utmost lengths with a man for whom she now disclaims all affection; and what security can I have for her reserve with others, who will not be restrained by feelings of delicacy towards her, and whom she has probably preferred to me for their want of it. '*She can make no more confidences*'—these words ring for ever in my ears, and will be my death-watch. They can have but one meaning, be sure of it—she always expressed herself with the exactest propriety. That was one of the things for which I loved her—shall I live to hate her for it? My poor fond heart, that brooded over her and the remains of her affections as my only hope of comfort upon earth, cannot brook this new degradation. Who is there so low as me? Who is there besides (I ask) after the homage I have paid her and the caresses she has lavished on me, so vile, so abhorrent to love, to whom such an indignity could have happened? When I think of this (and I think of nothing else) it stifles me. I am pent up in burning, fruitless desires, which can find no vent or object. Am I not hated, repulsed, derided by her whom alone I love or ever did love? I cannot stay in any place, and seek in vain for relief from the sense of her contempt and her ingratitude. I can settle to nothing: what is the use of all I have done? Is it not that very circumstance (my thinking beyond my strength, my feeling more than I need about so many things) that has withered me up, and made me a thing for Love to shrink from and wonder at? Who could ever feel that peace from the touch of her dear hand that I have done; and is it not torn from me for ever? My state is this, that I shall never lie down again at night nor rise up in the morning in peace, nor ever behold my little boy's face with pleasure while I live—unless I am restored to her favour. Instead of that delicious feeling I had when she was heavenly-kind to me, and my heart softened and melted in its own tenderness and her sweetness, I am now inclosed in a dungeon of despair. The sky is marble to my thoughts; nature is dead around me, as hope is within me; no object can give me one gleam of satisfaction now, nor the prospect of it in time to come. I wander by the sea-side; and the eternal ocean and lasting despair and her face are before me. Slighted by her, on whom my heart by its last fibre hung, where shall I turn? I wake with her by my side, not as my sweet bedfellow, but as the corpse of my love, without a heart in her bosom, cold, insensible, or struggling from me; and the worm gnaws me, and the sting of unrequited love, and the canker of a hopeless, endless sorrow. I have lost the taste of my food by feverish anxiety; and my favourite beverage, which used to refresh me when I got up, has no moisture in it. Oh! cold, solitary, sepulchral breakfasts, compared with those which I promised myself with her; or which I made when she had been standing an hour by my side, my guardian-angel, my wife, my sister, my sweet friend, my Eve, my all; and had blest me with her seraph kisses! Ah! what I suffer at present only shews what I have enjoyed. But 'the girl is a good girl, if there is goodness in human nature.' I thank you for those words; and I will fall down and worship you, if you can prove them true: and I would not do much less for him that proves her a demon. She is one or the other, that's certain; but I fear the worst. Do let me know if anything has passed: suspense is my greatest punishment. I am going into the country to see if I can work a little in the three weeks I have yet to stay here. Write on the receipt of this, and believe me ever your unspeakably obliged friend.

TO EDINBURGH

——'STONY-HEARTED' Edinburgh! What art thou to me? The dust of thy streets mingles with my tears and blinds me. City of palaces, or of tombs—a quarry, rather than the habitation of men! Art thou like London, that populous hive, with its sunburnt, well-baked, brick-built houses—its public edifices, its theatres, its bridges, its squares, its ladies, and its pomp, its throng of wealth, its outstretched magnitude, and its mighty heart that never lies still? Thy cold grey walls reflect back the leaden melancholy of the soul. The square, hard-edged, unyielding faces of thy inhabitants have no sympathy to impart. What is it to me that I look along the level line of thy tenantless streets, and meet perhaps a lawyer like a grasshopper chirping and skipping, or the daughter of a Highland laird, haughty, fair, and freckled? Or why should I look down your boasted Prince's Street, with the beetle-browed Castle on one side, and the Calton Hill with its proud monument at the further end, and the ridgy steep of Salisbury Crag, cut off abruptly by Nature's boldest hand, and Arthur's Seat overlooking all, like a lioness watching her cubs? Or shall I turn to the far-off Pentland Hills, with Craig-Crook nestling beneath them, where lives the prince of critics and the king of men? Or cast my eye unsated over the Frith of Forth, that from my window of an evening (as I read of AMY and her love) glitters like a broad golden mirror in the sun, and kisses the winding shores of kingly Fife? Oh no! But to thee, to thee I turn, North Berwick-Law, with thy blue cone rising out of summer seas; for thou art the beacon of my banished thoughts, and dost point my way to her, who is my heart's true home. The air is too thin for me, that has not the breath of Love in it; that is not embalmed by her sighs!

LETTER IX

A THOUGHT

I am not mad, but my heart is so; and raves within me, fierce and untameable, like a panther in its den, and tries to get loose to its lost mate, and fawn on her hand, and bend lowly at her feet.

ANOTHER

Oh! thou dumb heart, lonely, sad, shut up in the prison-house of this rude form, that hast never found a fellow but for an instant, and in very mockery of thy misery, speak, find bleeding words to express thy thoughts, break thy dungeon-gloom, or die pronouncing thy Infelice's name!

ANOTHER

Within my heart is lurking suspicion, and base fear, and shame and hate; but above all, tyrannous love sits throned, crowned with her graces, silent and in tears.

LETTER IX

My dear P——, You have been very kind to me in this business; but I fear even your indulgence for my infirmities is beginning to fail. To what a state am I reduced, and for what? For fancying a little artful vixen to be an angel and a saint, because she affected to look like one, to hide her rank thoughts and deadly purposes. Has she not murdered me under the mask of the tenderest friendship? And why? Because I have loved her with unutterable love, and sought to make her my wife. You say it is my own 'outrageous conduct' that has estranged her: nay, I have been *too gentle* with her. I ask you first in candour whether the ambiguity of her behaviour with respect to me, sitting and fondling a man (circumstanced as I was) sometimes for half a day together, and then declaring she had no love for him beyond common regard, and professing never to marry, was not enough to excite my suspicions, which the different exposures from the conversations below-stairs were not calculated to allay? I ask you what you yourself would have felt or done, if loving her as I did, you had heard what I did, time after time? Did not her mother own to one of the grossest charges (which I shall not repeat)—and is such indelicacy to be reconciled with her pretended character (that character with which I fell in love, and to which I *made love*) without supposing her to be the greatest hypocrite in the world? My unpardonable offence has been that I took her at her word, and was willing to believe her the precise little puritanical person she set up for. After exciting her wayward desires by the fondest embraces and the purest kisses, as if she had been 'made my wedded wife yestreen,' or was to become so to-morrow (for that was always my feeling with respect to her)—I did not proceed to gratify them, or to follow up my advantage by any action which should declare, 'I think you a common adventurer, and will see whether you are so or not!' Yet any one but a credulous fool like me would have made the experiment, with whatever violence to himself, as a matter of life and death; for I had every reason to distrust appearances. Her conduct has been of a piece from the beginning. In the midst of her closest and falsest endearments, she has always (with one or two exceptions) disclaimed the natural inference to be drawn from them, and made a verbal reservation, by which she might lead me on in a Fool's Paradise, and make me the tool of her levity, her avarice, and her love of intrigue as long as she liked, and dismiss me whenever it suited her. This, you see, she has done, because my intentions grew serious, and if complied with, would deprive her of *the pleasures of a single life!* Offer marriage to this 'tradesman's daughter, who has as nice a sense of honour as any one can have;' and like Lady Bellaston in *Tom Jones*, she *cuts* you immediately in a fit of abhorrence and alarm. Yet she seemed to be of a different mind formerly, when struggling from me in the height of our first intimacy, she exclaimed —'However I might agree to my own ruin, I never will consent to bring disgrace upon my family!' That I should have spared the traitress after expressions like this, astonishes me when I look back upon it. Yet if it were all to do over again, I know I should act just the same part. Such is her power over me! I cannot run the least risk of offending her—I love her so. When I look in her face, I cannot doubt her truth! Wretched being that I am! I have thrown away my heart and soul upon an unfeeling girl; and my life (that might have been so happy, had she been what I thought her) will soon follow either voluntarily, or by the force of grief, remorse, and disappointment. I cannot get rid of the reflection for an instant, nor even seek relief from its galling pressure. Ah! what a heart she has lost! All the love and affection of my whole life were centred in her, who alone, I thought, of all women had found out my true character, and knew how to value my tenderness. Alas! alas! that this, the only hope, joy, or comfort I ever had, should turn to a mockery, and hang like an ugly film over the remainder of my days!—I was at Roslin Castle yesterday. It lies low in a rude, but sheltered valley, hid from the vulgar gaze, and powerfully reminds one of the old song. The straggling fragments of the russet ruins, suspended smiling and graceful in the air as if they would linger out another century to please the curious beholder, the green larch-trees trembling between with the blue sky and white silver clouds, the wild mountain plants starting out here and there, the date of the year on an old low door-way, but still more, the beds of flowers in orderly decay, that seem to have no hand to tend them, but keep up a sort of traditional remembrance of civilization in former ages, present altogether a delightful and amiable subject for contemplation. The exquisite beauty of the scene, with the thought of what I should feel, should I ever be restored to her, and have to lead her through such places as my adored, my angel-wife, almost drove me beside myself. For this picture, this ecstatic vision, what have I of late instead as the image of the reality? Demoniacal possessions. I see the young witch seated in another's lap, twining her serpent arms round him, her eye glancing and her cheeks on fire—why does not the hideous thought choke me? Or why do I not go and find out the truth at once? The moonlight streams over the silver waters: the bark is in the bay that might waft me to her, almost with a wish. The mountain-breeze sighs out her name: old ocean with a world of tears murmurs back my woes! Does not my heart yearn to be with her; and shall I not follow its bidding? No, I must wait till I am free; and then I will take my Freedom (a glad prize) and lay it at her feet and tell her my proud love of her that would not brook a rival in her dishonour, and that would have her all or none, and gain her or lose myself for ever!—

You see by this letter the way I am in, and I hope you will excuse it as the picture of a half-disordered mind. The least respite from my uneasiness (such as I had yesterday) only brings the contrary reflection back upon me, like a flood; and by letting me see the happiness I have lost, makes me feel, by contrast, more acutely what I am doomed to bear.

LETTER X

Dear Friend, Here I am at St. Bees once more, amid the scenes which I greeted in their barrenness in winter; but which have now put on their full green attire that shews luxuriant to the eye, but speaks a tale of sadness to this heart widowed of its last, its dearest, its only hope! Oh! lovely Bees-Inn! here I composed a volume of law-cases, here I wrote my enamoured follies to her, thinking her human, and that 'all below was not the fiend's'—here I got two cold, sullen answers from the little witch, and here I was ——— and I was damned. I thought the revisiting the old haunts would have soothed me for a time, but it only brings back the sense of what I have suffered for her and of her unkindness the more strongly, till I cannot endure the recollection. I eye the Heavens in dumb despair, or vent my sorrows in the desart air. 'To the winds, to the waves, to the rocks I complain'—you may suppose with what effect! I fear I shall be obliged to return. I am tossed about (backwards and forwards) by my passion, so as to become ridiculous. I can now understand how it is that mad people never remain in the same place—they are moving on for ever, *from themselves!*

Do you know, you would have been delighted with the effect of the Northern twilight on this romantic country as I rode along last night? The hills and groves and herds of cattle were seen reposing in the grey dawn of midnight, as in a moonlight without shadow. The whole wide canopy of Heaven shed its reflex light upon them, like a pure crystal mirror. No sharp points, no petty details, no hard contrasts—every object was seen softened yet distinct, in its simple outline and natural tones, transparent with an inward light, breathing its own mild lustre. The landscape altogether was like an airy piece of mosaic-work, or like one of Poussin's broad massy landscapes or Titian's lovely pastoral scenes. Is it not so, that poets see nature, veiled to the sight, but revealed to the soul in visionary grace and grandeur! I confess the sight touched me; and might have removed all sadness except mine. So (I thought) the light of her celestial face once shone into my soul, and wrapt me in a heavenly trance. The sense I have of beauty raises me for a moment above myself, but depresses me the more afterwards, when I recollect how it is thrown away in vain admiration, and that it only makes me more susceptible of pain from the mortifications I meet with. Would I had never seen her! I might then not indeed have been happy, but at least I might have passed my life in peace, and have sunk into forgetfulness without a pang.—The noble scenery in this country mixes with my passion, and refines, but does not relieve it. I was at Stirling Castle not long ago. It gave me no pleasure. The declivity seemed to me abrupt, not sublime; for in truth I did not shrink back from it with terror. The weather-beaten towers were stiff and formal: the air was damp and chill: the river winded its dull, slimy way like a snake along the marshy grounds: and the dim misty tops of Ben Leddi, and the lovely Highlands (woven fantastically of thin air) mocked my embraces and tempted my longing eyes like her, the sole queen and mistress of my thoughts! I never found my contemplations on this subject so subtilised and at the same time so desponding as on that occasion. I wept myself almost blind, and I gazed at the broad golden sun-set through my tears that fell in showers. As I trod the green mountain turf, oh! how I wished to be laid beneath it—in one grave with her—that I might sleep with her in that cold bed, my hand in hers, and my heart for ever still—while worms should taste her sweet body, that I had never tasted! There was a time when I could bear solitude; but it is too much for me at present. Now I am no sooner left to myself than I am lost in infinite space, and look round me in vain for support or comfort. She was my stay, my hope: without her hand to cling to, I stagger like an infant on the edge of a precipice. The universe without her is one wide, hollow abyss, in which my harassed thoughts can find no resting-place. I must break off here; for the *hysterica passio* comes upon me, and threatens to unhinge my reason.

LETTER XI

My dear and good Friend, I am afraid I trouble you with my querulous epistles, but this is probably the last. To-morrow or the next day decides my fate with respect to the divorce, when I expect to be a free man. In vain! Was it not for her and to lay my freedom at her feet, that I consented to this step which has cost me infinite perplexity, and now to be discarded for the first pretender that came in her way! If so, I hardly think I can survive it. You who have been a favourite with women, do not know what it is to be deprived of one's only hope, and to have it turned to shame and disappointment. There is nothing in the world left that can afford me one drop of comfort—*this* I feel more and more. Everything is to me a mockery of pleasure, like her love. The breeze does not cool me: the blue sky does not cheer me. I gaze only on her face averted from me—alas! the only face that ever was turned fondly to me! And why am I thus treated? Because I wanted her to be mine for ever in love or friendship, and did not push my gross familiarities as far as I might. 'Why can you not go on as we have done, and say nothing about the word, *forever?*' Was it not plain from this that she even then meditated an escape from me to some less sentimental lover? 'Do you allow anyone else to do so?' I said to her once, as I was toying with her. 'No, not now!' was her answer; that is, because there was nobody else in the house to take freedoms with her. I was very well as a stopgap, but I was to be nothing more. While the coast was clear, I had it all my own way: but the instant C—— came, she flung herself at his head in the most barefaced way, ran breathless up stairs before him, blushed when his foot was heard, watched for him in the passage, and was sure to be in close conference with him when he went down again. It was then my mad proceedings commenced. No wonder. Had I not reason to be jealous of every appearance of familiarity with others, knowing how easy she had been with me at first, and that she only grew shy when I did not take farther liberties? What has her character to rest upon but her attachment to me, which she now denies, not modestly, but impudently? Will you yourself say that if she had all along no particular regard for me, she will not do as much or more with other more likely men? 'She has had,' she says, 'enough of my conversation,' so it could not be that! Ah! my friend, it was not to be supposed I should ever meet even with the outward demonstrations of regard from any woman but a common trader in the endearments of love! I have tasted the sweets of the well practiced illusion, and now feel the bitterness of knowing what a bliss I am deprived of, and must ever be deprived of. Intolerable conviction! Yet I might, I believe, have won her by other methods; but some demon held my hand. How indeed could I offer her the least insult when I worshipped her very footsteps; and even now pay her divine honours from my inmost heart, whenever I think of her, abased and brutalised as I have been by that Circean cup of kisses, of enchantments, of which I have drunk! I am choked, withered, dried up with chagrin, remorse, despair, from which I have not a moment's respite, day or night. I have always some horrid dream about her, and wake wondering what is the matter that 'she is no longer the same to me as ever?' I thought at least we should always remain dear friends, if nothing more—did she not talk of coming to live with me only the day before I left her in the winter? But 'she 's gone, I am abused, and my revenge must be to *love* her!'—Yet she knows that one line, one word would save me, the cruel, heartless destroyer! I see nothing for it but madness, unless Friday brings a change, or unless she is willing to let me go back. You must know I wrote to her to that purpose, but it was a very quiet, sober letter, begging pardon, and professing reform for the future, and all that. What effect it will have, I know not. I was forced to get out of the way of her answer, till Friday came.

Ever your's.

TO S. L.

My dear Miss L——, *Evil to them that evil think*, is an old saying; and I have found it a true one. I have ruined myself by my unjust suspicions of you. Your sweet friendship was the balm of my life; and I have lost it, I fear for ever, by one fault and folly after another. What would I give to be restored to the place in your esteem, which, you assured me, I held only a few months ago! Yet I was not contented, but did all I could to torment myself and harass you by endless doubts and jealousy. Can you not forget and forgive the past, and judge of me by my conduct in future? Can you not take all my follies in the lump, and say like a good, generous girl, 'Well, I'll think no more of them?' In a word, may I come back, and try to behave better? A line to say so would be an additional favour to so many already received by

Your obliged friend,
And sincere well-wisher.

LETTER XII. TO C. P——

I have no answer from her. I'm mad. I wish you to call on M—— in confidence, to say I intend to make her an offer of my hand, and that I will write to her father to that effect the instant I am free, and ask him whether he thinks it will be to any purpose, and what he would advise me to do.

UNALTERED LOVE

> 'Love is not love that alteration finds:
> Oh no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
> That looks on tempests and is never shaken.'

Shall I not love her for herself alone, in spite of fickleness and folly? To love her for her regard to me, is not to love her, but myself. She has robbed me of herself: shall she also rob me of my love of her? Did I not live on her smile? Is it less sweet because it is withdrawn from me? Did I not adore her every grace? Does she bend less enchantingly, because she has turned from me to another? Is my love then in the power of fortune, or of her caprice? No, I will have it lasting as it is pure; and I will make a Goddess of her, and build a temple to her in my heart, and worship her on indestructible altars, and raise statues to her: and my homage shall be unblemished as her unrivalled symmetry of form; and when that fails, the memory of it shall survive; and my bosom shall be proof to scorn, as her's has been to pity; and I will pursue her with an unrelenting love, and sue to be her slave, and tend her steps without notice and without reward; and serve her living, and mourn for her when dead. And thus my love will have shewn itself superior to her hate; and I shall triumph and then die. This is my idea of the only true and heroic love! Such is mine for her.

PERFECT LOVE

Perfect love has this advantage in it, that it leaves the possessor of it nothing farther to desire. There is one object (at least) in which the soul finds absolute content, for which it seeks to live, or dares to die. The heart has as it were filled up the moulds of the imagination. The truth of passion keeps pace with and outvies the extravagance of mere language. There are no words so fine, no flattery so soft, that there is not a sentiment beyond them, that it is impossible to express, at the bottom of the heart where true love is. What idle sounds the common phrases, *adorable creature*, *angel*, *divinity*, are? What a proud reflection it is to have a feeling answering to all these, rooted in the breast, unalterable, unutterable, to which all other feelings are light and vain! Perfect love reposes on the object of its choice, like the halcyon on the wave; and the air of heaven is around it.

FROM C. P., ESQ.

London, July 4th, 1822.

I have seen M——! Now, my dear H——, let me entreat and adjure you to take what I have to tell you, *for what it is worth*—neither for less, nor more. In the first place, I have learned nothing decisive from him. This, as you will at once see, is, as far as it goes, good. I am either to hear from him, or see him again in a day or two; but I thought you would like to know what passed inconclusive as it was—so I write without delay, and in great haste to save a post. I found him frank, and even friendly in his manner to me, and in his views respecting you. I think that he is sincerely sorry for your situation; and he feels that the person who has placed you in that situation is not much less awkwardly situated herself; and he professes that he would willingly do what he can for the good of both. But he sees great difficulties attending the affair—which he frankly professes to consider as an altogether unfortunate one. With respect to the marriage, he seems to see the most formidable objections to it, on both sides; but yet he by no means decidedly says that it cannot, or that it ought not to take place. These, mind you, are his own feelings on the subject: but the most important point I learn from him is this, that he is not prepared to use his influence either way—that the rest of the family are of the same way of feeling; and that, in fact, the thing must and does entirely rest with herself. To learn this was, as you see, gaining a great point.—When I then endeavoured to ascertain whether he knew anything decisive as to what are her views on the subject, I found that he did not. He has an opinion on the subject, and he didn't scruple to tell me what it was; but he has no positive knowledge. In short, he believes, from what he learns from herself (and he had purposely seen her on the subject, in consequence of my application to him) that she is at present indisposed to the marriage; but he is not prepared to say positively that she will not consent to it. Now all this, coming from him in the most frank and unaffected manner, and without any appearance of cant, caution, or reserve, I take to be most important as it respects your views, whatever they may be; and certainly much more favorable to them (I confess it) than I was prepared to expect, supposing them to remain as they were. In fact, as I said before, the affair rests entirely with herself. They are none of them disposed either to further the marriage, or throw any insurmountable obstacles in the way of it; and what is more important than all, they are evidently by no means *certain* that SHE may not, at some future period, consent to it; or they would, for her sake as well as their own, let you know as much flatly, and put an end to the affair at once.

Seeing in how frank and straitforward a manner he received what I had to say to him, and replied to it, I proceeded to ask him what were *his* views, and what were likely to be *her's* (in case she did not consent) as to whether you should return to live in the house;—but I added, without waiting for his answer, that if she intended to persist in treating you as she had done for some time past, it would be worse than madness for you to think of returning. I added that, in case you did return, all you would expect from her would be that she would treat you with civility and kindness—that she would continue to evince that friendly feeling towards you, that she had done for a great length of time, &c. To this, he said, he could really give no decisive reply, but that he should be most happy if, by any intervention of his, he could conduce to your comfort; but he seemed to think that for you to return on any express understanding that she should behave to you in any particular manner, would be to place her in a most awkward situation. He went somewhat at length into this point, and talked very reasonably about it; the result, however, was that he would not throw any obstacles in the way of your return, or of her treating you as a friend, &c., nor did it appear that he believed she would refuse to do so. And, finally, we parted on the understanding that he would see them on the subject, and ascertain what could be done for the comfort of all parties: though he was of opinion that if you could make up your mind to break off the acquaintance altogether, it would be the best plan of all. I am to hear from him again in a day or two.—Well, what do you say to all this? Can you turn it to any thing but good—comparative good? If you would know what *I* say to it, it is this:—She is still to be won by wise and prudent conduct on your part; she was always to have been won by such;—and if she is lost, it has been (not, as you sometimes suppose, because you have not carried that unwise, may I not say *unworthy?* conduct still farther, but) because you gave way to it at all. Of course I use the terms 'wise' and 'prudent' with reference to your object. Whether the pursuit of that object is wise, only yourself can judge. I say she has all along been to be won, and she still is to be won; and all that stands in the way of your views at this moment is your past conduct. They are all of them, every soul, frightened at you; they have *seen* enough of you to make them so; and they have doubtless heard ten times more than they have seen, or than anyone else has seen. They are all of them, including M—— (and particularly she herself) frightened out of their wits, as to what might be your treatment of her if she were your's; and they dare not trust you—they will not trust you, at present. I do not say that they will trust you, or rather that *she* will, for it all depends on her, when you have gone through a probation, but I am sure that she will not trust you till you have. You will, I hope, not be angry with me when I say that she would be a fool if she did. If she were to accept you at present, and without knowing more of you, even *I* should begin to suspect that she had an unworthy motive for doing it. Let me not forget to mention what is perhaps as important a point as any, as it regards the marriage. I of course stated to M—— that when you are free, you are prepared to make her a formal offer of your hand; but I begged him, if he was certain that such an offer would be refused, to tell me so plainly at once, that I might endeavour, in that case, to dissuade you from subjecting yourself to the pain of such a refusal. *He would not tell me that he was certain.* He said his opinion was that she would not accept your offer, but still he seemed to think that there would be no harm in making it!—One word more, and a very important one. He once, and without my referring in the slightest manner to that part of the subject, spoke of her as a *good girl*, and *likely to make any man an excellent wife!* Do you think if she were a bad girl (and if she were, he must know her to be so) he would have dared to do this, under these circumstances?—And once, in speaking of *his* not being a fit person to set his face against 'marrying for love,' he added 'I did so myself, and out of that house; and I have had reason to rejoice at it ever since.' And mind (for I anticipate your cursed suspicions) I 'm certain, at least, if manner can entitle one to be certain of any thing, that he said all this spontaneously, and without any understood motive; and I 'm certain, too, that he knows you to be a person that it would not do to play any tricks of this kind with. I believe—(and all this would never have entered my thoughts, but that I know it will enter your's) I believe that even if they thought (as you have sometimes supposed they do) that she needs whitewashing, or making an honest woman of, *you* would be the last person they would think of using for such a purpose, for they know (as well as I do) that you couldn't fail to find out the trick in a month, and would turn her into the street the next moment, though she were twenty times your wife—and that, as to the consequences of doing so, you would laugh at them, even if you cou'dn't escape from them.—I shall lose the post if I say more.

Believe me,
Ever truly your friend,
C. P.

LETTER XIII

My dear P——, You have saved my life. If I do not keep friends with her now, I deserve to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. She is an angel from Heaven, and you cannot pretend I ever said a word to the contrary! The little rogue must have liked me from the first, or she never could have stood all these hurricanes without slipping her cable. What could she find in me? 'I have mistook my person all this while,' &c. Do you know I saw a picture, the very pattern of her, the other day, at Dalkeith Palace (Hope finding Fortune in the Sea), just before this blessed news came, and the resemblance drove me almost out of my senses. Such delicacy, such fulness, such perfect softness, such buoyancy, such grace! If it is not the very image of her, I am no judge.—You have the face to doubt my making the best husband in the world; you might as well doubt it if I was married to one of the Houris of Paradise. She is a saint, an angel, a love. If she deceives me again, she kills me. But I will have such a kiss when I get back, as shall last me twenty years. May God bless her for not utterly disowning and destroying me! What an exquisite little creature it is, and how she holds out to the last in her system of consistent contradictions! Since I wrote to you about making a formal proposal, I have had her face constantly before me, looking so like some faultless marble statue, as cold, as fixed and graceful as ever statue did; the expression (nothing was ever like *that!*) seemed to say—'I wish I could love you better than I do, but still I will be your's.' No, I'll never believe again that she will not be mine; for I think she was made on purpose for me. If there's anyone else that understands that turn of her head as I do, I'll give her up without scruple. I have made up my mind to this, never to dream of another woman, while she even thinks it worth her while to *refuse to have me*. You see I am not hard to please, after all. Did M—— know of the intimacy that had subsisted between us? Or did you hint at it? I think it would be a *clencher*, if he did. How ought I to behave when I go back? Advise a fool, who had nearly lost a Goddess by his folly. The thing was, I could not think it possible she would ever like *me*. Her taste is singular, but not the worse for that. I'd rather have her love, or liking (call it what you will) than empires. I deserve to call her mine; for nothing else *can* atone for what I've gone through for her. I hope your next letter will not reverse all, and then I shall be happy till I see her,—one of the blest when I do see her, if she looks like my own beautiful love. I may perhaps write a line when I come to my right wits.—Farewel at present, and thank you a thousand times for what you have done for your poor friend.

P.S.—I like what M—— said about her sister, much. There are good people in the world: I begin to see it, and believe it.

LETTER THE LAST

DEAR P——, To-morrow is the decisive day that makes me or mars me. I will let you know the result by a line added to this. Yet what signifies it, since either way I have little hope there, 'whence alone my hope cometh!' You must know I am strangely in the dumps at this present writing. My reception with her is doubtful, and my fate is then certain. The hearing of your happiness has, I own, made me thoughtful. It is just what I proposed to her to do—to have crossed the Alps with me, to sail on sunny seas, to bask in Italian skies, to have visited Vevai and the rocks of Meillerie, and to have repeated to her on the spot the story of Julia and St. Preux, and to have shewn her all that my heart had stored up for her—but on my forehead alone is written—REJECTED! Yet I too could have adored as fervently, and loved as tenderly as others, had I been permitted. You are going abroad, you say, happy in making happy. Where shall I be? In the grave, I hope, or else in her arms. To me, alas! there is no sweetness out of her sight, and that sweetness has turned to bitterness, I fear; that gentleness to sullen scorn! Still I hope for the best. If she will but *have* me, I 'll make her *love* me: and I think her not giving a positive answer looks like it, and also shews that there is no one else. Her holding out to the last also, I think, proves that she was never to have been gained but with honour. She 's a strange, almost an inscrutable girl: but if I once win her consent, I shall kill her with kindness.—Will you let me have a sight of *somebody* before you go? I should be most proud. I was in hopes to have got away by the Steam-boat to-morrow, but owing to the business not coming on till then, I cannot; and may not be in town for another week, unless I come by the Mail, which I am strongly tempted to do. In the latter case I shall be *there*, and visible on Saturday evening. Will you look in and see, about eight o'clock? I wish much to see you and her and J. H. and my little boy once more; and then, if she is not what she once was to me, I care not if I die that instant. I will conclude here till to-morrow, as I am getting into my old melancholy.—

It is all over, and I am my own man, and your's ever—

LIBER AMORIS

PART III

ADDRESSED TO J. S. K——

My dear K——, It is all over, and I know my fate. I told you I would send you word, if anything decisive happened; but an impenetrable mystery hung over the affair till lately. It is at last (by the merest accident in the world) dissipated; and I keep my promise, both for your satisfaction, and for the ease of my own mind.

You remember the morning when I said 'I will go and repose my sorrows at the foot of Ben Lomond'—and when from Dumbarton Bridge its giant-shadow, clad in air and sunshine, appeared in view. We had a pleasant day's walk. We passed Smollett's monument on the road (somehow these poets touch one in reflection more than most military heroes)—talked of old times; you repeated Logan's beautiful verses to the cuckoo,[1] which I wanted to compare with Wordsworth's, but my courage failed me; you then told me some passages of an early attachment which was suddenly broken off; we considered together which was the most to be pitied, a disappointment in love where the attachment was mutual or one where there has been no return, and we both agreed, I think, that the former was best to be endured, and that to have the consciousness of it a companion for life was the least evil of the two, as there was a secret sweetness that took off the bitterness and the sting of regret, and 'the

[1] 'Sweet bird, thy bower is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No winter in thy year.'

So they begin. It was the month of May; the cuckoo sang shrouded in some woody copse; the showers fell between whiles; my friend repeated the lines with native enthusiasm in a clear manly voice, still resonant of youth and hope. Mr. Wordsworth will excuse me, if in these circumstances I declined entering the field with his profounder metaphysical strain, and kept my preference to myself.

memory of what once had been' atoned, in some measure, and at intervals, for what 'never more could be.' In the other case, there was nothing to look back to with tender satisfaction, no redeeming trait, not even a possibility of turning it to good. It left behind it not cherished sighs, but stifled pangs. The galling sense of it did not bring moisture into the eyes, but dried up the heart ever after. One had been my fate, the other had been yours!—

You startled me every now and then from my reverie by the robust voice, in which you asked the country people (by no means prodigal of their answers)—'If there was any trout-fishing in those streams?'—and our dinner at Luss set us up for the rest of our day's march. The sky now became overcast; but this, I think, added to the effect of the scene. The road to Tarbet is superb. It is on the very verge of the lake—hard, level, rocky, with low stone bridges constantly flung across it, and fringed with birch trees, just then budding into spring, behind which, as through a slight veil, you saw the huge shadowy form of Ben Lomond. It lifts its enormous but graceful bulk direct from the edge of the water without any projecting lowlands, and has in this respect much the advantage of Skiddaw. Loch Lomond comes upon you by degrees as you advance, unfolding and then withdrawing its conscious beauties like an accomplished coquet. You are struck with the point of a rock, the arch of a bridge, the Highland huts (like the first rude habitations of men) dug out of the soil, built of turf, and covered with brown heather, a sheep-cote, some straggling cattle feeding half-way down a precipice; but as you advance farther on, the view expands into the perfection of lake scenery. It is nothing (or your eye is caught by nothing) but water, earth, and sky. Ben Lomond waves to the right, in its simple majesty, cloud-capt or bare, and descending to a point at the head of the lake, shews the Trossacs beyond, tumbling about their blue ridges like woods waving; to the left is the Cobler, whose top is like a castle shattered in pieces and nodding to its ruin; and at your side rise the shapes of round pastoral hills, green, fleeced with herds, and retiring into mountainous bays and upland valleys, where solitude and peace might make their lasting home, if peace were to be found in solitude! That it was not always so, I was a sufficient proof; for there was one image that alone haunted me in the midst of all this sublimity and beauty, and turned it to a mockery and a dream!

The snow on the mountain would not let us ascend; and being weary of waiting and of being visited by the guide every two hours to let us know that the weather would not do, we returned, you homewards, and I to London—

'Italiam, Italiam!'

You know the anxious expectations with which I set out:—now hear the result.—

As the vessel sailed up the Thames, the air thickened with the consciousness of being near her, and I 'heaved her name pantingly forth.' As I approached the house, I could not help thinking of the lines—

> 'How near am I to a happiness,
> That earth exceeds not! Not another like it.
> The treasures of the deep are not so precious
> As are the conceal'd comforts of a man
> Lock'd up in woman's love. I scent the air
> Of blessings when I come but near the house.
> What a delicious breath true love sends forth!
> The violet-beds not sweeter. Now for a welcome
> Able to draw men's envies upon man:
> A kiss now that will hang upon my lip,
> As sweet as morning dew upon a rose,
> And full as long!'

I saw her, but I saw at the first glance that there was something amiss. It was with much difficulty and after several pressing intreaties that she was prevailed on to come up into the room; and when she did, she stood at the door, cold, distant, averse; and when at length she was persuaded by my repeated remonstrances to come and take my hand, and I offered to touch her lips, she turned her head and shrunk from my embraces, as if quite alienated or mortally offended. I asked what it could mean? What had I done in her absence to have incurred her displeasure? Why had she not written to me? I could get only short, sullen, disconnected answers, as if there was something labouring in her mind which she either could not or would not impart. I hardly knew how to bear this first reception after so long an absence, and so different from the one my sentiments towards her merited; but I thought it possible it might be prudery (as I had returned without having actually accomplished what I went about) or that she had taken offence at something in my letters. She saw how much I was hurt. I asked her, 'If she was altered since I went away?'—'No.' 'If there was any one else who had been so fortunate as to gain her favourable opinion?'—'No, there was no one else.' 'What was it then? Was it any thing in my letters? Or had I displeased her by letting Mr. P—— know she wrote to me?'—'No, not at all; but she did not apprehend my last letter required any answer, or she would have replied to it.' All this appeared to me very unsatisfactory and evasive; but I could get no more from her, and was obliged to let her go with a heavy, foreboding heart. I however found that C—— was gone, and no one else had been there, of whom I had cause to be jealous.—'Should I see her on the morrow?'—'She believed so, but she could not promise.' The next morning she did not appear with the breakfast as usual. At this I grew somewhat uneasy. The little Buonaparte, however, was placed in its old position on the mantle-piece, which I considered as a sort of recognition of old times. I saw her once or twice casually; nothing particular happened till the next day, which was Sunday. I took occasion to go into the parlour for the newspaper, which she gave me with a gracious smile, and seemed tolerably frank and cordial. This of course acted as a spell upon me. I walked out with my little boy, intending to go and dine out at one or two places, but I found that I still contrived to bend my steps towards her, and I went back to take tea at home. While we were out, I talked to William about Sarah, saying that she too was unhappy, and asking him to make it up with her. He said, if she was unhappy, he would not bear her malice any more. When she came up with the tea-things, I said to her, 'William has something to say to you—I believe he wants to be friends.' On which he said in his abrupt, hearty manner, 'Sarah, I'm sorry if I've ever said anything to vex you'—so they shook hands, and she said, smiling affably—'*Then* I'll think no more of it!' I added—'I see you've brought me back my little Buonaparte'—She answered with tremulous softness—'I told you I'd keep it safe for you!'—as if her pride and pleasure in doing so had been equal, and she had, as it were, thought of nothing during my absence but how to greet me with this proof of her fidelity on my return. I cannot describe her manner. Her words are few and simple; but you can have no idea of the exquisite, unstudied, irresistible graces with which she accompanies them, unless you can suppose a Greek statue to smile, move, and speak. Those lines in Tibullus seem to have been written on purpose for her—

Quicquid agit quoquo vestigià vertit,
Componit furtim, subsequiturque decor.

Or what do you think of those in a modern play, which might actually have been composed with an eye to this little trifler—

——'See with what a waving air she goes
Along the corridor. How like a fawn!
Yet statelier. No sound (however soft)
Nor gentlest echo telleth when she treads,
But every motion of her shape doth seem
Hallowed by silence. So did Hebe grow
Among the gods a paragon! Away, I'm grown
The very fool of Love!'

The truth is, I never saw anything like her, nor I never shall again. How then do I console myself for the loss of her? Shall I tell you, but you will not mention it again? I am foolish enough to believe that she and I, in spite of every thing, shall be sitting together over a sea-coal fire, a comfortable good old couple, twenty years hence! But to my narrative.—

I was delighted with the alteration in her manner, and said, referring to the bust—'You know it is not mine, but your's; I gave it you; nay, I have given you all—my heart, and whatever I possess, is your's! She seemed good-humouredly to decline this *carte blanche* offer, and waved, like a thing of enchantment, out of the room. False calm!—Deceitful smiles!—Short interval of peace, followed by lasting woe! I sought an interview with her that same evening. I could not get her to come any farther than the door. 'She was busy—she could hear what I had to say there.' 'Why do you seem to avoid me as you do? Not one five minutes' conversation, for the sake of old acquaintance? Well, then, for the sake of *the little image!*' The appeal seemed to have lost its efficacy; the charm was broken; she remained immoveable. 'Well, then I must come to you, if you will not run away.' I went and sat down in a chair near the door, and took her hand, and talked to her for three quarters of an hour; and she listened patiently, thoughtfully, and seemed a good deal affected by what I said. I told her how much I had felt, how much I had suffered for her in my absence, and how much I had been hurt by her sudden silence, for which I knew not how to account. I could have done nothing to offend her while I was away; and my letters were, I hoped, tender and respectful. I had had but one thought ever present with me; her image never quitted my side, alone or in company, to delight or distract me. Without her I could have no peace, nor ever should again, unless she would behave to me as she had done formerly. There was no abatement of my regard to her; why was she so changed? I said to her, 'Ah! Sarah, when I think that it is only a year ago that you were everything to me I could wish, and that now you seem lost to me for ever, the month of May (the name of which ought to be a signal for joy and hope) strikes chill to my heart.—How different is this meeting from that delicious parting, when you seemed never weary of repeating the proofs of your regard and tenderness, and it was with difficulty we tore ourselves asunder at last! I am ten thousand times fonder of you than I was then, and ten thousand times more unhappy.' 'You have no reason to be so; my feelings towards you are the same as they ever were.' I told her 'She was my all of hope or comfort: my passion for her grew stronger every time I saw her.' She answered, 'She was sorry for it; for *that* she never could return.' I said something about looking ill: she said in her pretty, mincing, emphatic way, 'I despise looks!' So, thought I, it is not that; and she says there's no one else: it must be some strange air she gives herself, in consequence of the approaching change in my circumstances. She has been probably advised not to give up till all is fairly over, and then she will be my own sweet girl again. All this time she was standing just outside the door, my hand in hers (would that they could have grown together!) she was dressed in a loose morning-gown, her hair curled beautifully; she stood with her profile to me, and looked down the whole time. No expression was ever more soft or perfect. Her whole attitude, her whole form, was dignity and bewitching grace. I said to her, 'You look like a queen, my love, adorned with your own graces!' I grew idolatrous, and would have kneeled to her. She made a movement, as if she was displeased. I tried to draw her towards me. She wouldn't. I then got up, and offered to kiss her at parting. I found she obstinately refused. This stung me to the quick. It was the first time in her life she had ever done so. There must be some new bar between us to produce these continued denials; and she had not even esteem enough left to tell me so. I followed her half-way down-stairs, but to no purpose, and returned into my room, confirmed in my most dreadful surmises. I could bear it no longer. I gave way to all the fury of disappointed hope and jealous passion. I was made the dupe of trick and cunning, killed with cold, sullen scorn; and, after all the agony I had suffered, could obtain no explanation why I was subjected to it. I was still to be tantalized, tortured, made the cruel sport of one, for whom I would have sacrificed all. I tore the locket which contained her hair (and which I used to wear continually in my bosom, as the precious token of her dear regard) from my neck, and trampled it in pieces. I then dashed the little Buonaparte on the ground, and stamped upon it, as one of her instruments of mockery. I could not stay in the room; I could not leave it; my rage, my despair were uncontroulable. I shrieked curses on her name, and on her false love; and the scream I uttered (so pitiful and so piercing was it, that the sound of it terrified me) instantly brought the whole house, father, mother, lodgers and all, into the room. They thought I was destroying her and myself. I had gone into the bedroom, merely to hide away from myself, and as I came out of it, raging-mad with the new sense of present shame and lasting misery, Mrs. F—— said, 'She's in there! He has got her in there!' thinking the cries had proceeded from her, and that I had been offering her violence. 'Oh! no,' I said, 'She's in no danger from me; I am not the person;' and tried to burst from this scene of degradation. The mother endeavoured to stop me, and said, 'For God's sake, don't go out, Mr. ——! for God's sake, don't!' Her father, who was not, I believe, in the secret, and was therefore justly scandalised at such outrageous conduct, said angrily, 'Let him go! Why should he stay?' I however sprang down stairs, and as they called out to me, 'What is it?—What has she done to you?' I answered, 'She has murdered me!—She has destroyed me for ever!—She has doomed my soul to perdition!' I rushed out of the house, thinking to quit it forever; but I was no sooner in the street, than the desolation and the darkness became greater, more intolerable; and the eddying violence of my passion drove me back to the source, from whence it sprung. This unexpected explosion, with the conjectures to which it would give rise, could not be very agreeable to the *precieuse* or her family; and when I went back, the father was waiting at the door, as if anticipating this sudden turn of my feelings, with no friendly aspect. I said, 'I have to beg pardon, Sir; but my mad fit is over, and I wish to say a few words to you in private.' He seemed to hesitate, but some uneasy forebodings on his own account, probably, prevailed over his resentment; or, perhaps (as philosophers have a desire to know the cause of thunder) it was a natural curiosity to know what circumstances of provocation had given rise to such an extraordinary scene of confusion. When we reached my room, I requested him to be seated. I said, 'It is true, Sir, I have lost my peace of mind for ever, but at present I am quite calm and collected, and I wish to explain to you why I have behaved in so extravagant a way, and to ask for your advice and intercession.' He appeared satisfied, and I went on. I had no chance either of exculpating myself, or of probing the question to the bottom, but by stating the naked truth, and therefore I said at once, 'Sarah told me, Sir (and I never shall forget the way in which she told me, fixing her dove's eyes upon me, and looking a thousand tender reproaches for the loss of that good opinion, which she held dearer than all the world) she told me, Sir, that as you one day passed the door, which stood a-jar, you saw her in an attitude which a good deal startled you; I mean sitting in my lap, with her arms round my neck, and mine twined round her in the fondest manner. What I wished to ask was, whether this was actually the case, or whether it was a mere invention of her own, to enhance the sense of my obligations to her; for I begin to doubt everything?'—'Indeed, it was so; and very much surprised and hurt I was to see it.' 'Well then, Sir, I can only say, that as you saw her sitting then, so she had been sitting for the last year and a half, almost every day of her life, by the hour together;

and you may judge yourself, knowing what a nice modest-looking girl she is, whether, after having been admitted to such intimacy with so sweet a creature, and for so long a time, it is not enough to make any one frantic to be received by her as I have been since my return, without any provocation given or cause assigned for it.' The old man answered very seriously, and, as I think, sincerely, 'What you now tell me, Sir, mortifies and shocks me as much as it can do yourself. I had no idea such a thing was possible. I was much pained at what I saw; but I thought it an accident, and that it would never happen again.'—'It was a constant habit; it has happened a hundred times since, and a thousand before. I lived on her caresses as my daily food, nor can I live without them.' So I told him the whole story, 'what conjurations, and what mighty magic I won his daughter with,' to be anything but *mine for life*. Nothing could well exceed his astonishment and apparent mortification. 'What I had said,' he owned, 'had left a weight upon his mind that he should not easily get rid of.' I told him, 'For myself, I never could recover the blow I had received. I thought, however, for her own sake, she ought to alter her present behaviour. Her marked neglect and dislike, so far from justifying, left her former intimacies without excuse; for nothing could reconcile them to propriety, or even a pretence to common decency, but either love, or friendship so strong and pure that it could put on the guise of love. She was certainly a singular girl. Did she think it right and becoming to be free with strangers, and strange to old friends?' I frankly declared, 'I did not see how it was in human nature for any one who was not rendered callous to such familiarities by bestowing them indiscriminately on every one, to grant the extreme and continued indulgences she had done to me, without either liking the man at first, or coming to like him in the end, in spite of herself. When my addresses had nothing, and could have nothing honourable in them, she gave them every encouragement; when I wished to make them honourable, she treated them with the utmost contempt. The terms we had been all along on were such as if she had been to be my bride next day. It was only when I wished her actually to become so, to ensure her own character and my happiness, that she shrunk back with precipitation and panic-fear. There seemed to me something wrong in all this; a want both of common propriety, and I might say, of natural feeling; yet, with all her faults, I loved her, and ever should, beyond any other human being. I had drank in the poison of her sweetness too long ever to be cured of it; and though I might find it to be poison in the end, it was still in my veins. My only ambition was to be permitted to live with her, and to die in her arms. Be she what she would, treat me how she would, I felt that my soul was wedded to hers; and were she a mere lost creature, I would try to snatch her from perdition, and marry her to-morrow if she would have me. That was the question—'Would she have me, or would she not?' He said he could not tell; but should not attempt to put any constraint upon her inclinations, one way or other. I acquiesced, and added, that 'I had brought all this upon myself, by acting contrary to the suggestions of my friend, Mr. ——, who had desired me to take no notice whether she came near me or kept away, whether she smiled or frowned, was kind or contemptuous—all you have to do, is to wait patiently for a month till you are your own man, as you will be in all probability; then make her an offer of your hand, and if she refuses, there's an end of the matter.' Mr. L. said, 'Well, Sir, and I don't think you can follow a better advice!' I took this as at least a sort of negative encouragement, and so we parted.

TO THE SAME

(*in continuation*).

My dear Friend, The next day I felt almost as sailors must do after a violent storm over-night, that has subsided towards day-break. The morning was a dull and stupid calm, and I found she was unwell, in consequence of what had happened. In the evening I grew more uneasy, and determined on going into the country for a week or two. I gathered up the fragments of the locket of her hair, and the little bronze statue, which were strewed about the floor, kissed them, folded them up in a sheet of paper, and sent them to her, with these lines written in pencil on the outside—'*Pieces of a broken heart, to be kept in remembrance of the unhappy. Farewell.*' No notice was taken; nor did I expect any. The following morning I requested Betsey to pack up my box for me, as I should go out of town the next day, and at the same time wrote a note to her sister to say, I should take it as a favour if she would please to accept of the enclosed copies of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, *The Man of Feeling*, and *Nature and Art*, in lieu of three volumes of my own writings, which I had given her on different occasions, in the course of our acquaintance. I was piqued, in fact, that she should have these to shew as proofs of my weakness, and as if I thought the way to win her was by plaguing her with my own performances. She sent me word back that the books I had sent were of no use to her, and that I should have those I wished for in the afternoon; but that she could not before, as she had lent them to her sister, Mrs. M——. I said, 'very well;' but observed (laughing) to Betsey, 'It 's a bad rule to give and take; so, if Sarah won't have these books, you must; they are very pretty ones, I assure you.' She curtsied and took them, according to the family custom. In the afternoon, when I came back to tea, I found the little girl on her knees, busy in packing up my things, and a large paper parcel on the table, which I could not at first tell what to make of. On opening it, however, I soon found what it was. It contained a number of volumes which I had given her at different times (among others, a little Prayer-Book, bound in crimson velvet, with green silk linings; she kissed it twenty times when she received it, and said it was the prettiest present in the world, and that she would shew it to her aunt, who would be proud of it)—and all these she had returned together. Her name in the title-page was cut out of them all. I doubted at the instant whether she had done this before or after I had sent for them back, and I have doubted of it since; but there is no occasion to suppose her *ugly all over with hypocrisy*. Poor little thing! She has enough to answer for, as it is. I asked Betsey if she could carry a message for me, and she said '*Yes*.' 'Will you tell your sister, then, that I did not want all these books; and give my love to her, and say that I shall be obliged if she will still keep these that I have sent back, and tell her that it is only those of my own writing that I think unworthy of her.' What do you think the little imp made answer? She raised herself on the other side of the table where she stood, as if inspired by the genius of the place, and said—'AND THOSE ARE THE ONES THAT SHE PRIZES THE MOST!' If there were ever words spoken that could revive the dead, those were the words. Let me kiss them, and forget that my ears have heard aught else! I said, 'Are you sure of that?' and she said, 'Yes, quite sure.' I told her, 'If I could be, I should be very different from what I was.' And I became so that instant, for these casual words carried assurance to my heart of her esteem—that once implied, I had proofs enough of her fondness. Oh! how I felt at that moment! Restored to love, hope, and joy, by a breath which I had caught by the merest accident, and which I might have pined in absence and mute despair for want of hearing! I did not know how to contain myself; I was childish, wanton, drunk with pleasure. I gave Betsey a twenty-shilling note which I happened to have in my hand, and on her asking 'What's this for, Sir?' I said, 'It's for you. Don't you think it worth that to be made happy? You once made me very wretched by some words I heard you drop, and now you have made me as happy; and all I wish you is, when you grow up, that you may find some one to love you as well as I do your sister, and that you may love better than she does me!' I continued in this state of delirium or dotage all that day and the next, talked incessantly, laughed at every thing, and was so extravagant, nobody could tell what was the matter with me. I murmured her name; I blest her; I folded her to my heart in delicious fondness; I called her by my own name; I worshipped her: I was mad for her. I told P—— I should laugh in her face, if ever she pretended not to like me again. Her mother came in and said, she hoped I should excuse Sarah's coming up. 'Oh, Ma'am,' I said, 'I have no wish to see her; I feel her at my heart; she does not hate me after all, and I wish for nothing. Let her come when she will, she is to me welcomer than light, than life; but let it be in her own sweet time, and at her own dear pleasure.' Betsey also told me she was 'so glad to get the books back.' I, however, sobered and wavered (by degrees) from seeing nothing of her, day after day; and in less than a week I was devoted to the Infernal Gods. I could hold out no longer than the Monday evening following. I sent a message to her; she returned an ambiguous answer; but she came up. Pity me, my friend, for the shame of this recital. Pity me for the pain of having ever had to make it! If the spirits of mortal creatures, purified by faith and hope, can (according to the highest assurances) ever, during thousands of years of smooth-rolling eternity and balmy, sainted repose, forget the pain, the toil, the anguish, the helplessness, and the despair they have suffered here, in this frail being, then may I forget that withering hour, and her, that fair, pale form that entered, my inhuman betrayer, and my only earthly love! She said, 'Did you wish to speak to me, Sir?' I said, 'Yes, may I not speak to you? I wanted to see you and be friends.' I rose up, offered her an arm-chair which stood facing, bowed on it, and knelt to her adoring. She said (going) 'If that's all, I have nothing to say.' I replied, 'Why do you treat me thus? What have I done to become thus hateful to you?' *Answer*, 'I always told you I had no affection for you.' You may suppose this was a blow, after the imaginary honey-moon in which I had passed the preceding week. I was stunned by it; my heart sunk within me. I contrived to say, 'Nay, my dear girl, not always neither; for did you not once (if I might presume to look back to those happy, happy times), when you were sitting on my knee as usual, embracing and embraced, and I asked if you could not love me at last, did you not make answer, in the softest tones that ever man heard, '*I could easily say so, whether I did or not; you should judge by my actions!*' Was I to blame in taking you at your word, when every hope I had depended on your sincerity? And did you not say since I came back, '*Your feelings to me were the same as ever?*' Why then is your behaviour so different?' S. 'Is it nothing, your exposing me to the whole house in the way you did the other evening?' H. 'Nay, that was the consequence of your cruel reception of me, not the cause of it. I had better have gone away last year, as I proposed to do, unless you would give some pledge of your fidelity; but it was your own offer that I should remain. "Why should I go?" you said, "Why could we not go on the same as we had done, and say nothing about the word *forever?*"' S. 'And how did you behave when you returned?' H. 'That was all forgiven when we last parted, and your last words were, "I should find you the same as ever" when I came home? Did you not that very day enchant and madden me over again by the purest kisses and embraces, and did I not go from you (as I said) adoring, confiding, with every assurance of mutual esteem and friendship?' S. 'Yes, and in your absence I found that you had told my aunt what had passed between us.' H. 'It was to induce her to extort your real sentiments from you, that you might no longer make a secret of your true regard for me, which your actions (but not your words) confessed.' S. 'I own I have been guilty of improprieties, which you have gone and repeated, not only in the house, but out of it; so that it has come to my ears from various quarters, as if I was a light character. And I am determined in future to be guided by the advice of my relations, and particularly of my aunt, whom I consider as my best friend, and keep every lodger at a proper distance.' You will find hereafter that her favourite lodger, whom she visits daily, had left the house; so that she might easily make and keep this vow of extraordinary self-denial. Precious little dissembler! Yet her aunt, her best friend, says, 'No, Sir, no; Sarah's no hypocrite!' which I was fool enough to believe; and yet my great and unpardonable offence is to have entertained passing doubts on this delicate point. I said, Whatever errors I had committed, arose from my anxiety to have everything explained to her honour: my conduct shewed that I had that at heart, and that I built on the purity of her character as on a rock. My esteem for her amounted to adoration. 'She did not want adoration.' It was only when any thing happened to imply that I had been mistaken, that I committed any extravagance, because I could not bear to think her short of perfection. 'She was far from perfection,' she replied, with an air and manner (oh, my God!) as near it as possible. 'How could she accuse me of a want of regard to her? It was but the other day, Sarah,' I said to her, 'when that little circumstance of the books happened, and I fancied the expressions your sister dropped proved the sincerity of all your kindness to me—you don't know how my heart melted within me at the thought, that after all, I might be dear to you. New hopes sprung up in my heart, and I felt as Adam must have done when his Eve was created for him!' 'She had heard enough of that sort of conversation,' (moving towards the door). This, I own, was the unkindest cut of all. I had, in that case, no hopes whatever. I felt that I had expended words in vain, and that the conversation below stairs (which I told you of when I saw you) had spoiled her taste for mine. If the allusion had been classical I should have been to blame; but it was scriptural, it was a sort of religious courtship, and Miss L. is religious!

At once he took his Muse and dipt her
Right in the middle of the Scripture.

It would not do—the lady could make neither head nor tail of it. This is a poor attempt at levity. Alas! I am sad enough. 'Would she go and leave me so? If it was only my own behaviour, I still did not doubt of success. I knew the sincerity of my love, and she would be convinced of it in time. If that was all, I did not care: but tell me true, is there not a new attachment that is the real cause of your estrangement? Tell me, my sweet friend, and before you tell me, give me your hand (nay, both hands) that I may have something to support me under the dreadful conviction.' She let me take her hands in mine, saying, 'She supposed there could be no objection to that,'—as if she acted on the suggestions of others, instead of following her own will—but still avoided giving me any answer. I conjured her to tell me the worst, and kill me on the spot. Any thing was better than my present state. I said, 'Is it Mr. C——?' She smiled, and said with gay indifference, 'Mr. C—— was here a very short time.' 'Well, then, was it Mr. ——?' She hesitated, and then replied faintly, 'No.' This was a mere trick to mislead; one of the profoundnesses of Satan, in which she is an adept. 'But,' she added hastily, 'she could make no more confidences.' 'Then,' said I, 'you have something to communicate.' 'No; but she had once mentioned a thing of the sort, which I had hinted to her mother, though it signified little.' All this while I was in tortures. Every word, every half-denial, stabbed me. 'Had she any tie?' 'No, I have no tie?' 'You are not going to be married soon?' 'I don't intend ever to marry at all!' 'Can't you be friends with me as of old?' 'She could give no promises.' 'Would she make her own terms?' 'She would make none.'—'I was sadly afraid the *little image* was dethroned from her heart, as I had dashed it to the ground the other night.'—'She was neither desperate nor violent.' I did not answer—'But deliberate and deadly,'—though I might; and so she vanished in this running fight of question and answer, in spite of my vain efforts to detain her. The cockatrice, I said, mocks me: so she has always done. The thought was a dagger to me. My head reeled, my heart recoiled within me. I was stung with scorpions; my flesh crawled; I was choked with rage; her scorn scorched me like flames; her air (her heavenly air) withdrawn from me, stifled me, and left me gasping for breath and being. It was a fable. She started up in her own likeness, a serpent in place of a woman. She had fascinated, she had stung me, and had returned to her proper shape, gliding from me after inflicting the mortal wound, and instilling deadly poison into every pore; but her form lost none of its original brightness by the change of character, but was all glittering, beauteous, voluptuous grace. Seed of the serpent or of the woman, she was divine! I felt that she was a witch, and had bewitched me. Fate had enclosed me round about. *I* was transformed too, no longer human (any more than she, to whom I had knit myself) my feelings were marble; my blood was of molten lead; my thoughts on fire. I was taken out of myself, wrapt into another sphere, far from the light of day, of hope, of love. I had no natural affection left; she had slain me, but no other thing had power over me. Her arms embraced another; but her mock-embrace, the phantom of her love, still bound me, and I had not a wish to escape. So I felt then, and so perhaps shall feel till I grow old and die, nor have any desire that my years should last longer than they are linked in the chain of those amorous folds, or than her enchantments steep my soul in oblivion of all other things! I started to find myself alone—for ever alone, without a creature to love me. I looked round the room for help; I saw the tables, the chairs, the places where she stood or sat, empty, deserted, dead. I could not stay where I was; I had no one to go to but to the parent-mischief, the preternatural hag, that had 'drugged this posset' of her daughter's charms and falsehood for me, and I went down and (such was my weakness and helplessness) sat with her for an hour, and talked with her of her daughter, and the sweet days we had passed together, and said I thought her a good girl, and believed that if there was no rival, she still had a regard for me at the bottom of her heart; and how I liked her all the better for her coy, maiden airs: and I received the assurance over and over that there was no one else; and that Sarah (they all knew) never staid five minutes with any other lodger, while with me she would stay by the hour together, in spite of all her father could say to her (what were her motives, was best known to herself!) and while we were talking of her, she came bounding into the room, smiling with smothered delight at the consummation of my folly and her own art; and I asked her mother whether she thought she looked as if she hated me, and I took her wrinkled, withered, cadaverous, clammy hand at parting, and kissed it. Faugh!—

I will make an end of this story; there is something in it discordant to honest ears. I left the house the next day, and returned to Scotland in a state so near to phrenzy, that I take it the shades sometimes ran into one another. R—— met me the day after I arrived, and will tell you the way I was in. I was like a person in a high fever; only mine was in the mind instead of the body. It had the same irritating, uncomfortable effect on the bye-standers. I was incapable of any application, and don't know what I should have done, had it not been for the kindness of ——. I came to see you, to 'bestow some of my tediousness upon you,' but you were gone from home. Everything went on well as to the law business; and as it approached to a conclusion, I wrote to my good friend P—— to go to M——, who had married her sister, and ask him if it would be worth my while to make her a formal offer, as soon as I was free, as, with the least encouragement, I was ready to throw myself at her feet; and to know, in case of refusal, whether I might go back there and be treated as an old friend. Not a word of answer could be got from her on either point, notwithstanding every importunity and intreaty; but it was the opinion of M—— that I might go and try my fortune. I did so with joy, with something like confidence. I thought her giving no positive answer implied a chance, at least, of the reversion of her favour, in case I behaved well. All was false, hollow, insidious. The first night after I got home, I slept on down. In Scotland, the flint had been my pillow. But now I slept under the same roof with her. What softness, what balmy repose in the very thought! I saw her that same day and shook hands with her, and told her how glad I was to see her; and she was kind and comfortable, though still cold and distant. Her manner was altered from what it was the last time. She still absented herself from the room, but was mild and affable when she did come. She was pale, dejected, evidently uneasy about something, and had been ill. I thought it was perhaps her reluctance to yield to my wishes, her pity for what I suffered; and that in the struggle between both, she did not know what to do. How I worshipped her at these moments! We had a long interview the third day, and I thought all was doing well. I found her sitting at work in the window-seat of the front parlour; and on my asking if I might come in, she made no objection. I sat down by her; she let me take her hand; I talked to her of indifferent things, and of old times. I asked her if she would put some new frills on my shirts?—'With the greatest pleasure.' If she could get *the little image* mended? 'It was broken in three pieces, and the sword was gone, but she would try.' I then asked her to make up a plaid silk which I had given her in the winter, and which she said would make a pretty summer gown. I so longed to see her in it!—'She had little time to spare, but perhaps might!' Think what I felt, talking peaceably, kindly, tenderly with my love,—not passionately, not violently. I tried to take pattern by her patient meekness, as I thought it, and to subdue my desires to her will. I then sued to her, but respectfully, to be admitted to her friendship—she must know I was as true a friend as ever woman had—or if there was a bar to our intimacy from a dearer attachment, to let me know it frankly, as I shewed her all my heart. She drew out her handkerchief and wiped her eyes 'of tears which sacred pity had engendered there.' Was it so or not? I cannot tell. But so she stood (while I pleaded my cause to her with all the earnestness, and fondness in the world) with the tears trickling from her eye-lashes, her head stooping, her attitude fixed, with the finest expression that ever was seen of mixed regret, pity, and stubborn resolution; but without speaking a word, without altering a feature. It was like a petrifaction of a human face in the softest moment of passion. 'Ah!' I said, 'how you look! I have prayed again and again while I was away from you, in the agony of my spirit, that I might but live to see you look so again, and then breathe my last!' I intreated her to give me some explanation. In vain! At length she said she must go, and disappeared like a spirit. That week she did all the little trifling favours I had asked of her. The frills were put on, and she sent up to know if I wanted any more done. She got the Buonaparte mended. This was like healing old wounds indeed! How? As follows, for thereby hangs the conclusion of my tale. Listen.

630 RIDGE ROAD
ELEY, CAL

I had sent a message one evening to speak to her about some special affairs of the house, and received no answer. I waited an hour expecting her, and then went out in great vexation at my disappointment. I complained to her mother a day or two after, saying I thought it so unlike Sarah's usual propriety of behaviour, that she must mean it as a mark of disrespect. Mrs. L—— said, 'La! Sir, you're always fancying things. Why, she was dressing to go out, and she was only going to get the little image you're both so fond of mended; and it's to be done this evening. She has been to two or three places to see about it, before she could get anyone to undertake it.' My heart, my poor fond heart, almost melted within me at this news. I answered, 'Ah! Madam, that's always the way with the dear creature. I am finding fault with her and thinking the hardest things of her; and at that very time she's doing something to shew the most delicate attention, and that she has no greater satisfaction than in gratifying my wishes!' On this we had some farther talk, and I took nearly the whole of the lodgings at a hundred guineas a year, that (as I said) she might have a little leisure to sit at her needle of an evening, or to read if she chose, or to walk out when it was fine. She was not in good health, and it would do her good to be less confined. I would be the drudge and she should no longer be the slave. I asked nothing in return. To see her happy, to make her so, was to be so myself.—This was agreed to. I went over to Blackheath that evening, delighted as I could be after all I had suffered, and lay the whole of the next morning on the heath under the open sky, dreaming of my earthly Goddess. This was Sunday. That evening I returned, for I could hardly bear to be for a moment out of the house where she was, and the next morning she tapped at the door—it was opened—it was she—she hesitated and then came forward: she had got the little image in her hand, I took it, and blest her from my heart. She said 'They had been obliged to put some new pieces to it.' I said 'I didn't care how it was done, so that I had it restored to me safe, and by her.' I thanked her and begged to shake hands with her. She did so, and as I held the only hand in the world that I never wished to let go, I looked up in her face, and said 'Have pity on me, have pity on me, and save me if you can!' Not a word of answer, but she looked full in my eyes, as much as to say, 'Well, I'll think of it; and if I can, I will save you!' We talked about the expense of repairing the figure. 'Was the man waiting?'—'No, she had fetched it on Saturday evening.' I said I'd give her the money in the course of the day, and then shook hands with her again in token of reconciliation; and she went waving out of the room, but at the door turned round and looked full at me, as she did the first time she beguiled me of my heart. This was the last.—

All that day I longed to go down stairs to ask her and her mother to set out with me for Scotland on Wednesday, and on Saturday I would make her my wife. Something withheld me. In the evening, however, I could not rest without seeing her, and I said to her younger sister, 'Betsey, if Sarah will come up now, I'll pay her what she laid out for me the other day.'—'My sister's gone out, Sir,' was the answer. What again! thought I, That's somewhat sudden. I told P—— her sitting in the window-seat of the front parlour boded me no good. It was not in her old character. She did not use to know there were doors or windows in the house—and now she goes out three times in a week. It is to meet some one, I'll lay my life on't. 'Where is she gone?'—'To my grandmother's, Sir.'

'Where does your grandmother live now?'—'At Somers' Town.' I immediately set out to Somers' Town. I passed one or two streets, and at last turned up King Street, thinking it most likely she would return that way home. I passed a house in King Street where I had once lived, and had not proceeded many paces, ruminating on chance and change and old times, when I saw her coming towards me. I felt a strange pang at the sight, but I thought her alone. Some people before me moved on, and I saw another person with her. *The murder was out.* It was a tall, rather well-looking young man, but I did not at first recollect him. We passed at the crossing of the street without speaking. Will you believe it, after all that had past between us for two years, after what had passed in the last half-year, after what had passed that very morning, she went by me without even changing countenance, without expressing the slightest emotion, without betraying either shame or pity or remorse or any other feeling that any other human being but herself must have shewn in the same situation. She had no time to prepare for acting a part, to suppress her feelings—the truth is, she has not one natural feeling in her bosom to suppress. I turned and looked—they also turned and looked—and as if by mutual consent, we both retrod our steps and passed again, in the same way. I went home. I was stifled. I could not stay in the house, walked into the street and met them coming towards home. As soon as he had left her at the door (I fancy she had prevailed with him to accompany her, dreading some violence) I returned, went up stairs, and requested an interview. Tell her, I said, I'm in excellent temper and good spirits, but I must see her! She came smiling, and I said 'Come in, my dear girl, and sit down, and tell me all about it, how it is and who it is.'—'What,' she said, 'do you mean Mr. C——?' 'Oh,' said I, 'Then it is he! Ah! you rogue, I always suspected there was something between you, but you know you denied it lustily: why did you not tell me all about it at the time, instead of letting me suffer as I have done? But, however, no reproaches. I only wish it may all end happily and honourably for you, and I am satisfied. But,' I said, 'you know you used to tell me, you despised looks.'—'She didn't think Mr. C—— was so particularly handsome.' 'No, but he's very well to pass, and a well-grown youth into the bargain.' Pshaw! let me put an end to the fulsome detail. I found he had lived over the way, that he had been lured thence, no doubt, almost a year before, that they had first spoken in the street, and that he had never once hinted at marriage, and had gone away, because (as he said) they were too much together, and that it was better for her to meet him occasionally out of doors. 'There could be no harm in them walking together.' 'No, but you may go some where afterwards.'—'One must trust to one's principle for that.' Consummate hypocrite! * * * * * * I told her Mr. M——, who had married her sister, did not wish to leave the house. I, who would have married her, did not wish to leave it. I told her I hoped I should not live to see her come to shame, after all my love of her; but put her on her guard as well as I could, and said, after the lengths she had permitted herself with me, I could not help being alarmed at the influence of one over her, whom she could hardly herself suppose to have a tenth part of my esteem for her!! She made no answer to this, but thanked me coldly for my good advice, and rose to go. I begged her to sit a few minutes, that I might try to recollect if there was anything else I wished to say to her, perhaps for the last time; and then, not finding anything, I bade her good night, and asked for a farewell kiss. Do you know she refused; so little does she understand what is due to friendship, or love, or honour! We parted friends, however, and I felt deep grief, but no enmity against her. I thought C—— had pressed his suit after I went, and had prevailed. There was no harm in that—a little fickleness or so, a little over-pretension to unalterable attachment—but that was all. She liked him better than me—it was my hard hap, but I must bear it. I went out to roam the desert streets, when, turning a corner, whom should I meet but her very lover? I went up to him and asked for a few minutes' conversation on a subject that was highly interesting to me and I believed not indifferent to him: and in the course of four hours' talk, it came out that for three months previous to my quitting London for Scotland, she had been playing the same game with him as with me—that he breakfasted first, and enjoyed an hour of her society, and then I took my turn, so that we never jostled; and this explained why, when he came back sometimes and passed my door, as she was sitting in my lap, she coloured violently, thinking if her lover looked in, what a *denouement* there would be. He could not help again and again expressing his astonishment at finding that our intimacy had continued unimpaired up to so late a period after he came, and when they were on the most intimate footing. She used to deny positively to him that there was anything between us, just as she used to assure me with impenetrable effrontery that 'Mr. C—— was nothing to her, but merely a lodger.' All this while she kept up the farce of her romantic attachment to her old lover, vowed that she never could alter in that respect, let me go to Scotland on the solemn and repeated assurance that there was no new flame, that there was no bar between us but this shadowy love—I leave her on this understanding, she becomes more fond or more intimate with her new lover; he quitting the house (whether tired out or not, I can't say)—in revenge she ceases to write to me, keeps me in wretched suspense, treats me like something loathsome to her when I return to enquire the cause, denies it with scorn and impudence, destroys me and shews no pity, no desire to soothe or shorten the pangs she has occasioned by her wantonness and hypocrisy, and wishes to linger the affair on to the last moment, going out to keep an appointment with another while she pretends to be obliging me in the tenderest point (which C—— himself said was too much). . . . What do you think of all this? Shall I tell you my opinion? But I must try to do it in another letter.

TO THE SAME

(*in conclusion*).

I DID not sleep a wink all that night; nor did I know till the next day the full meaning of what had happened to me. With the morning's light, conviction glared in upon me that I had not only lost her for ever—but every feeling I had ever had towards her—respect, tenderness, pity—all but my fatal passion, was gone. The whole was a mockery, a frightful illusion. I had embraced the false Florimel instead of the true; or was like the man in the Arabian Nights who had married a *goul*. How different was the idea I once had of her? Was this she,

—'Who had been beguiled—she who was made
Within a gentle bosom to be laid—
To bless and to be blessed—to be heart-bare
To one who found his bettered likeness there—
To think for ever with him, like a bride—
To haunt his eye, like taste personified—
To double his delight, to share his sorrow,
And like a morning beam, wake to him every morrow?'

I saw her pale, cold form glide silent by me, dead to shame as to pity. Still I seemed to clasp this piece of witchcraft to my bosom; this lifeless image, which was all that was left of my love, was the only thing to which my sad heart clung. Were she dead, should I not wish to gaze once more upon her pallid features? She is dead to me; but what she once was to me, can never die! The agony, the conflict of hope and fear, of adoration and jealousy is over; or it would, ere long, have ended with my life. I am no more lifted now to Heaven, and then plunged in the abyss; but I seem to have been thrown from the top of a precipice, and to lie groveling, stunned, and stupefied. I am melancholy, lonesome, and weaker than a child. The worst is, I have no prospect of any alteration for the better: she has cut off all possibility of a reconcilement at any future period. Were she even to return to her former pretended fondness and endearments, I could have no pleasure, no confidence in them. I can scarce make out the contradiction to myself. I strive to think she always was what I now know she is; but I have great difficulty in it, and can hardly believe but she still *is* what she so long *seemed*. Poor thing! I am afraid she is little better off herself; nor do I see what is to become of her, unless she throws off the mask at once, and *runs a-muck* at infamy. She is exposed and laid bare to all those whose opinion she set a value upon. Yet she held her head very high, and must feel (if she feels any thing) proportionably mortified.—A more complete experiment on character was never made. If I had not met her lover immediately after I parted with her, it would have been nothing. I might have supposed she had changed her mind in my absence, and had given him the preference as soon as she felt it, and even shewn her delicacy in declining any farther intimacy with me. But it comes out that she had gone on in the most forward and familiar way with both at once—(she could not change her mind in passing from one room to another)—told both the same bare-faced and unblushing falsehoods, like the commonest creature; received presents from me to the very last, and wished to keep up the game still longer, either to gratify her humour, her avarice, or her vanity in playing with my passion, or to have me as a *dernier resort*, in case of accidents. Again, it would have been nothing, if she had not come up with her demure, well-composed, wheedling looks that morning, and then met me in the evening in a situation, which (she believed) might kill me on the spot, with no more feeling than a common courtesan shews, who *bilks* a customer, and passes him, leering up at her bully, the moment after. If there had been the frailty of passion, it would have been excusable; but it is evident she is a practised, callous jilt, a regular lodging-house decoy, played off by her mother upon the lodgers, one after another, applying them to her different purposes, laughing at them in turns, and herself the probable dupe and victim of some favourite gallant in the end. I know all this; but what do I gain by it, unless I could find some one with her shape and air, to supply the place of the lovely apparition? That a professed wanton should come and sit on a man's knee, and put her arms round his neck, and caress him, and seem fond of him, means nothing, proves nothing, no one concludes anything from it; but that a pretty, reserved, modest, delicate-looking girl should do this, from the first hour to the last of your being in the house, without intending anything by it, is new, and, I think, worth explaining. It was, I confess, out of my calculation, and may be out of that of others. Her unmoved indifference and self-possession all the while, shew that it is her constant practice. Her look even, if closely examined, bears this interpretation. It is that of studied hypocrisy or startled guilt, rather than of refined sensibility or conscious innocence. 'She defied anyone to read her thoughts?' she once told me. 'Do they then require concealing?' I imprudently asked her. The command over herself is surprising. She never once betrays herself by any momentary forgetfulness, by any appearance of triumph or superiority to the person who is her dupe, by any levity of manner in the plenitude of her success; it is one faultless, undeviating, consistent, consummate piece of acting. Were she a saint on earth, she could not seem more like one. Her hypocritical high-flown pretensions, indeed, make her the worse: but still the ascendancy of her will, her determined perseverance in what she undertakes to do, has something admirable in it, approaching to the heroic. She is certainly an extraordinary girl! Her retired manner, and invariable propriety of behaviour made me think it next to impossible she could grant the same favours indiscriminately to every one that she did to me. Yet this now appears to be the fact. She must have done the very same with C——, invited him into the house to carry on a closer intrigue with her, and then commenced the double game with both together. She always 'despised looks.' This was a favourite phrase with her, and one of the hooks which she baited for me. Nothing could win her but a man's behaviour and sentiments. Besides, she could never like another—she was a martyr to disappointed affection—and friendship was all she could even extend to any other man. All the time, she was making signals, playing off her pretty person, and having occasional interviews in the street with this very man, whom she could only have taken so sudden and violent a liking to from his looks, his personal appearance, and what she probably conjectured of his circumstances. Her sister had married a counsellor—the Miss F——'s, who kept the house before, had done so too—and so would she. 'There was a precedent for it.' Yet if she was so desperately enamoured of this new acquaintance, if he had displaced *the little image* from her breast, if he was become her *second* 'unalterable attachment' (which I would have given my life to have been) why continue the same unwarrantable familiarities with me to the last, and promise that they should be renewed on my return (if I had not unfortunately stumbled upon the truth to her aunt) and yet keep up the same refined cant about her old attachment all the time, as if it was that which stood in the way of my pre tensions, and not her faithlessness to it? 'If one swerves from one, one shall swerve from another'—was her excuse for not returning my regard. Yet that which I thought a prophecy, was I suspect a history. She had swerved twice from her vowed engagements, first to me, and then from me to another. If she made a fool of me, what did she make of her lover? I fancy he has put that question to himself. I said nothing to him about the amount of the presents; which is another damning circumstance, that might have opened my eyes long before; but they were shut by my fond affection, which 'turned all to favour and to prettiness.' She cannot be supposed to have kept up an appearance of old regard to me, from a fear of hurting my feelings by her desertion; for she not only shewed herself indifferent to, but evidently triumphed in my sufferings, and heaped every kind of insult and indignity upon them. I must have incurred her contempt and resentment by my mistaken delicacy at different times; and her manner, when I have hinted at becoming a reformed man in this respect, convinces me of it. 'She hated it!' She always hated whatever she liked most. She 'hated Mr. C——'s red slippers,' when he first came! One more count finishes the indictment. She not only discovered the most hardened indifference to the feelings of others; she has not shewn the least regard to her own character, or shame when she was detected. When found out, she seemed to say, 'Well, what if I am? I have played the game as long as I could; and if I could keep it up no longer, it was not for want of good will!' Her colouring once or twice is the only sign of grace she has exhibited. Such is the creature on whom I had thrown away my heart and soul—one who was incapable of feeling the commonest emotions of human nature, as they regarded herself or any one else. 'She had no feelings with respect to herself,' she often said. She in fact knows what she is, and recoils from the good opinion or sympathy of others, which she feels to be founded on a deception; so that my overweening opinion of her must have appeared like irony, or direct insult. My seeing her in the street has gone a good way to satisfy me. Her manner there explains her manner in-doors to be conscious and overdone; and besides, she looks but indifferently. She is diminutive in stature, and her measured step and timid air do not suit these public airings. I am afraid she will soon grow common to my imagination, as well as worthless in herself. Her image seems fast 'going into the wastes of time,' like a weed that the wave bears farther and farther from me. Alas! thou poor hapless weed, when I entirely lose sight of thee, and for ever, no flower will ever bloom on earth to glad my heart again!

THE END

CHARACTERISTICS

IN THE MANNER OF ROCHEFOUCAULD'S MAXIMS

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

This book was published anonymously in a 12mo vol. of 152 pages in 1823, the title-page being as follows: 'Characteristics: In the Manner of Rochefoucault's Maxims. London: Printed for W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, Stationers'-Hall Court, Ludgate Street, 1823.' Some of the unsold copies were afterwards issued with a fresh undated title-page, and again in a so-called second edition in 1837, with an introduction by R. H. Horne. The title-page of this edition is as follows: 'Characteristics: In the Manner of Rochefoucault's Maxims. By William Hazlitt. Second Edition. With Introductory Remarks by the Editor of the "Monthly Repository." London: J. Templeman, 248 Regent Street and sold also by J. Miller, 404 Oxford Street, 1837.' A later edition (1871), edited by Mr. W. C. Hazlitt, was published in Bohn's Library in the volume containing *The Round Table* and *Characters of Shakespear's Plays*. The first edition is here reprinted.

PREFACE

The following work was suggested by a perusal of Rochefoucault's Maxims and Moral Reflections. I was so struck with the force and beauty of the style and matter, that I felt an earnest ambition to embody some occasional thoughts of my own in the same form. This was much easier than to retain an equal degree of spirit. Having, however, succeeded indifferently in a few, the work grew under my hands; and both the novelty and agreeableness of the task impelled me forward. There is a peculiar *stimulus*, and at the same time a freedom from all anxiety, in this mode of writing. A thought must tell at once, or not at all. There is no opportunity for considering how we shall make out an opinion by labour and prolixity. An observation must be self-evident; or a reason or illustration (if we give one) must be pithy and concise. Each Maxim should contain the essence or ground-work of a separate Essay, but so developed as of itself to suggest a whole train of reflections to the reader; and it is equally necessary to avoid paradox or common-place. The style also must be sententious and epigrammatic, with a certain pointedness and involution of expression, so as to keep the thoughts distinct, and to prevent them from running endlessly into one another. Such are the conditions to which it seemed to me necessary to conform, in order to insure anything like success to a work of this kind, or to render the pleasure of the perusal equal to the difficulty of the execution. There is only one point in which I dare even allude to a comparison with Rochefoucault—*I have had no theory to maintain*; and have endeavoured to set down each thought as it occurred to me, without bias or prejudice of any sort.

CHARACTERISTICS

I. Of all virtues, magnanimity is the rarest. There are a hundred persons of merit for one who willingly acknowledges it in another.

II. It is often harder to praise a friend than an enemy. By the last we may acquire a reputation for candour; by the first we only seem to discharge a debt, and are liable to a suspicion of partiality. Besides, though familiarity may not breed contempt, it takes off the edge of admiration; and the shining points of character are not those we chiefly wish to dwell upon. Our habitual impression of any one is very different from the light in which he would choose to appear before the public. We think of him *as a friend*: we must forget that he is one, before we can extol him to others.

III. To speak highly of one with whom we are intimate, is a species of egotism. Our modesty as well as our jealousy teaches us caution on this subject.

IV. What makes it so difficult to do justice to others is, that we are hardly sensible of merit, unless it falls in with our own views and line of pursuit; and where this is the case, it interferes with our own pretensions. To be forward to praise others, implies either great eminence, that can afford to part with applause; or great quickness of discernment, with confidence in our own judgments; or great sincerity and love of truth, getting the better of our self-love.

V. Many persons are so narrow in this respect, that they cannot bring themselves to allow the most trifling merit in any one else. This is not altogether ill-nature, but a meanness of spirit or want of confidence in themselves, which is upset and kicks the beam, if the smallest particle of praise is thrown into another's scale. They are poor feeble insects tottering along the road to fame, that are crushed by the shadow of opposition, or stopped by a whisper of rivalship.

VI. There are persons, not only whose praise, but whose very names we cannot bear to hear.

VII. There are people who cannot praise a friend for the life of them. With every effort and all the good-will in the world, they shrink from the task through a want of mental courage; as some people shudder at plunging into a cold-bath from weak nerves.

VIII. Others praise you behind your back, who will not, on any account, do so to your face. Is it that they are afraid of being taken for flatterers?—Or that they had rather any one else should know they think well of you than yourself;—as a rival is the last person we should wish to hear the favourable opinion of a mistress, because it gives him most pleasure?

IX. To deny undoubted merit in others, is to deny its existence altogether, and consequently our own. The example of illiberality we set is easily turned against ourselves.

X. Magnanimity is often concealed under an appearance of shyness, and even poverty of spirit. Heroes, according to Rousseau, are not known by the loftiness of their carriage; as the greatest braggarts are generally the merest cowards.

XI. Men of the greatest genius are not always the most prodigal of their encomiums. But then it is when their range of power is confined, and they have in fact little perception, except of their own particular kind of excellence.

XII. Popularity disarms envy in well-disposed minds. Those are ever the most ready to do justice to others, who feel that the world has done them justice. When success has not this effect in opening the mind, it is a sign that it has been ill-deserved.

XIII. Some people tell us all the harm—others as carefully conceal all the good they hear of us.

XIV. It signifies little what we say of our acquaintance, so that we do not tell them what others say against them. Tale-bearers make all the real mischief.

XV. The silence of a friend commonly amounts to treachery. His not daring to say anything in our behalf implies a tacit censure.

XVI. It is hard to praise those who are dispraised by others. He is little short of a hero, who perseveres in thinking well of a friend who has become a butt for slander, and a bye-word.

XVII. However we may flatter ourselves to the contrary, our friends think no higher of us than the world do. They see us with the jaundiced or distrustful eyes of others. They may know better, but their feelings are governed by popular prejudice. Nay, they are more shy of us (when under a cloud) than even strangers; for we involve them in a common disgrace, or compel them to embroil themselves in continual quarrels and disputes in our defence.

XVIII. We find those who are officious and troublesome through sheer imbecility of character. They can neither resolve to do a thing, nor to let it alone; and, by getting in the way, hinder where perhaps they meant to help. To *volunteer* a service and shrink from the performance, is to prevent others from undertaking it.

XIX. Envy, among other ingredients, has a mixture of the love of justice in it. We are more angry at undeserved than at deserved good-fortune.

XX. We admit the merit of some, much less willingly than that of others. This is because there is something about them, that is at variance with their boasted pretensions, either a heaviness importing stupidity, or a levity inferring folly, &c.

XXI. The assumption of merit is easier, less embarrassing, and more effectual than the positive attainment of it.

XXII. Envy is the most universal passion. We only pride ourselves on the qualities we possess or think we possess; but we envy the pretensions we have, and those which we have not, and do not even wish for. We envy the greatest qualities and every trifling advantage. We envy the most ridiculous appearance or affectation of superiority. We envy folly and conceit: nay, we go so far as to envy whatever confers distinction or notoriety, even vice and infamy.

XXIII. Envy is a littleness of soul, which cannot see beyond a certain point, and if it does not occupy the whole space, feels itself excluded.

XXIV. Or, it often arises from weakness of judgment. We cannot make up our minds to admit the soundness of certain pretensions; and therefore hate the appearance, where we are doubtful about the reality. We consider every such tax on our applause as a kind of imposition or injustice; so that the withholding our assent is from a fear of being tricked out of our good opinion under false pretences. This is the reason why sudden or upstart advantages are always an object of such extreme jealousy, and even of contempt; and why we so readily bow to the claims of posthumous and long-established reputation. The last is the sterling coin of merit, which we no longer question or cavil at. The other, we think, may be tinsel; and we are unwilling to give our admiration in exchange for a bauble. It is not that the candidates for it in the one case are removed out of our way, and make a diversion to the more immediate claims of our contemporaries; but that their own are so clear and universally acknowledged, that they come home to our feelings and bosoms with their full weight, without any drawbacks of doubt in our own minds, or objection on the part of others. If our envy were intrinsically and merely a hatred of excellence and of the approbation due to it, we should hate it the more, the more distinguished and unequivocal it was. On the other hand, our faith in standard reputation is a kind of religion; and our admiration of it, instead of a cold servile offering, an enthusiastic homage. There are people who would attempt to persuade us that we read Homer or Milton with pleasure, only to *spite* some living poet. With them, all our best actions are hypocrisy; and our best feelings, affectation.

XXV. The secret of our self-love is just the same as that of our liberality and candour. We prefer ourselves to others, only because we have a more intimate consciousness and confirmed opinion of our own claims and merits than of any other person's.

XXVI. It argues a poor opinion of ourselves, when we cannot admit any other class of merit besides our own, or any rival in that class.

XXVII. Those who are the most distrustful of themselves, are the most envious of others; as the most weak and cowardly are the most revengeful.

XXVIII. Some persons of great talents and celebrity have been remarkable for narrowness of mind and an impatience of everything like competition. Garrick and other public favourites might be mentioned as instances. This may perhaps be accounted for, either from an undue and intoxicating share of applause, so that they became jealous of popularity, as of a mistress; or from a want of other resources, so as to be unable to repose on themselves without the constant stimulus of incense offered to their vanity.

XXIX. We are more jealous of frivolous accomplishments with brilliant success, than of the most estimable qualities without it. Dr. Johnson envied Garrick whom he despised, and ridiculed Goldsmith whom he loved.

XXX. Persons of slender intellectual *stamina* dread competition, as dwarfs are afraid of being run over in the street. Yet vanity often prompts them to hazard the experiment, as women through foolhardiness rush into a crowd.

XXXI. We envy others for any trifling addition to their acknowledged merit, more than for the sum-total, much as we object to pay an addition to a bill, or grudge an acquaintance an unexpected piece of good fortune. This happens, either because such an accession of accomplishment is like stealing a march upon us, and implies a versatility of talent we had not reckoned upon; or it seems an impertinence and affectation for a man to go out of his way to distinguish himself; or it is because we cannot account for his proficiency mechanically and as a thing of course, by saying *It is his trade!* In like manner, we plume ourselves most on excelling in what we are not bound to do, and are most flattered by the admission of our most questionable pretensions. We nurse the ricketty child, and want to have our faults and weak sides pampered into virtues. We feel little obliged to any one for owning the merit we are known to have—it is an old story—but we are mightily pleased to be complimented on some fancy we set up for—it is *a feather in our cap*, a new conquest, an extension of our sense of power. A man of talent aspires to a reputation for personal address or advantages. Sir Robert Walpole wished to pass for a man of gallantry, for which he was totally unfit. A woman of sense would be thought a beauty, a beauty a great wit, and so on.

XXXII. Some there are who can only find out in us those good qualities which nobody else has discovered: as there are others who make a point of crying up our deserts, after all the rest of the world have agreed to do so. The first are patrons, not friends: the last are not friends, but sycophants.

XXXIII. A distinction has been made between acuteness and subtlety of understanding. This might be illustrated by saying, that acuteness consists in taking up the points or solid atoms, subtlety in feeling the *air* of truth.

XXXIV. Hope is the best possession. None are completely wretched but those who are without hope; and few are reduced so low as that.

XXXV. Death is the greatest evil; because it cuts off hope.

XXXVI. While we desire, we do not enjoy; and with enjoyment desire ceases, which should lend its strongest zest to it. This, however, does not apply to the gratification of sense, but to the passions, in which distance and difficulty have a principal share.

XXXVII. To deserve any blessing is to set a just value on it. The pains we take in its pursuit are only a consequence of this.

XXXVIII. The wish is often 'father to the thought': but we are quite as apt to believe what we dread as what we hope.

XXXIX. The amiable is the voluptuous in expression or manner. The sense of pleasure in ourselves is that which excites it in others; or, the art of pleasing is to seem pleased.

XL. Let a man's talents or virtues be what they may, we only feel satisfaction in his society, as he is satisfied in himself. We cannot enjoy the good qualities of a friend, if he seems to be none the better for them.

XLI. We judge of others for the most part by their good opinion of themselves: yet nothing gives such offence or creates so many enemies as that extreme self-complacency or superciliousness of manner, which appears to set the opinion of every one else at defiance.

XLII. Self-sufficiency is more provoking than rudeness or the most unqualified or violent opposition, inasmuch as the latter may be retorted, and implies that we are worth notice; whereas the former strikes at the root of our self-importance, and reminds us that even our good opinion is not worth having. Nothing precludes sympathy so much as a perfect indifference to it.

XLIII. The confession of our failings is a thankless office. It savours less of sincerity or modesty than of ostentation. It seems as if we thought our weaknesses as good as other people's virtues.

XLIV. A coxcomb is generally a favorite with women. To a certain point *his* self-complacency is agreeable in itself; and beyond that, even if it grows fulsome, it only piques their vanity the more to make a conquest of *his*. He becomes a sort of rival to them in his own good opinion, so that his conceit has all the effect of jealousy in irritating their desire to withdraw his admiration from himself.

XLV. Nothing is more successful with women than that sort of condescending patronage of the sex, which goes by the general name of gallantry. It has the double advantage of imposing on their weakness and flattering their pride. By being indiscriminate, it tantalizes and keeps them in suspense; and by making a profession of an extreme deference for the sex in general, naturally suggests the reflection, what a delightful thing must be to gain the exclusive regard of a man who has so high an opinion of what is due to the female character. It is possible for a man, by talking of what is *feminine* or *unfeminine*, *vulgar* or *genteel*, by saying *how shocking such an article of dress is*, or that *no lady ought to touch a particular kind of food*, fairly to starve or strip a whole circle of simpletons half-naked, by mere dint of impertinence, and an air of commonplace assurance. How interesting to be acquainted with a man whose every thought turns upon the sex! How charming to make a conquest of one who sets up for a consummate judge of female perfections!

XLVI. We like characters and actions which we do not approve. There are amiable vices and obnoxious virtues, on the mere principle that our sympathy with a person who yields to obvious temptations and agreeable impulses (however prejudicial) is itself agreeable, while to sympathise with exercises of self-denial or fortitude, is a painful effort. Virtue costs the spectator, as well as the performer, something. We are touched by the immediate motives of actions, we judge of them by the consequences. We like a convivial character better than an abstemious one, because the idea of conviviality in the first instance is pleasanter than that of sobriety. For the same reason, we prefer generosity to justice, because the imagination lends itself more easily to an ebullition of feeling, than to the suppression of it on remote and abstract principles; and we like a good-natured fool, or even knave better than the severe professors of wisdom and morality. Cato, Brutus, &c. are characters to admire and applaud, rather than to love or imitate.

XLVII. Personal pretensions alone ensure female regard. It is not the eye that sees whatever is sublime or beautiful in nature that the fair delight to see gazing in silent rapture on themselves, but that which is itself a pleasing object to the sense. I may look at a Claude or a Raphael by turns, but this does not alter my own appearance; and it is that which women attend to.

XLVIII. There are persons that we like, though they do not like us. This happens very rarely; and, indeed it argues a strong presumption of merit both in them and in ourselves. We fancy they only want to know us better, to be convinced of the prize they would obtain in our friendship. There are others, to whom no civilities or good offices on their parts can reconcile us, from an original distaste: yet even this repugnance would not, perhaps, be proof against time and custom.

XLIX. We may observe persons who seem to have a peculiar delight in the *disagreeable*. They catch all sorts of uncouth tones and gestures, the manners and dialect of clowns and hoydens, and aim at vulgarity as others ape gentility. (This is what is often understood by a love of low life.) They say all sorts of disagreeable things without meaning or feeling what they say. What startles or shocks other people is to them an amusing excitement, a fillip to their constitutions; and from the bluntness of their perceptions and a certain wilfulness of spirit, not being able to enter into the refined and pleasurable, they make a merit of being insensible to everything of the kind. Masculine women, for instance, are those who, not being possessed of the charms and delicacy of the sex, affect a superiority over it by throwing aside all decorum.

L. We find another class who continually do and say what they ought not, and what they do not intend; and who are governed almost entirely by an instinct of absurdity. Owing to a perversity of imagination or irritability of nerve, the idea that a thing is improper acts as a mechanical inducement to do it; the fear of committing a blunder is so strong, that they *bolt* out whatever is uppermost in their minds, before they are aware of it. The dread of some object haunts and rivets attention to it; and a continual, uneasy, morbid apprehensiveness of temper takes away their self-possession, and hurries them into the very mistakes they wish to avoid.

LI. There are few people quite above, or completely below *par*.

LII. Society is a more level surface than we imagine. Wise men or absolute fools are hard to be met with, as there are few giants or dwarfs. The heaviest charge we can bring against the general texture of society is, that it is commonplace; and many of those who are singular, had better be commonplace. Our fancied superiority to others is in some one thing, which we think most of, because we excel in it, or have paid most attention to it; whilst we overlook their superiority to us in something else, which they set equal and exclusive store by. This is fortunate for all parties. I never felt myself superior to any one, who did not go out of his way to affect qualities which he had not. In his own individual character and line of pursuit, every one has knowledge, experience, and skill:—and who shall say which pursuit requires most, thereby proving his own narrowness and incompetence to decide? Particular talent or genius does not imply general capacity. Those who are most versatile are seldom great in any one department: and the stupidest people can generally do something. The highest pre-eminence in any one study commonly arises from the concentration of the attention and faculties on that one study. He who expects from a great name in politics, in philosophy, in art, equal greatness in other things, is little versed in human nature. Our strength lies in our weakness. The learned in books is ignorant of the world. He who is ignorant of books is often well acquainted with other things: for life is of the same length in the learned and the unlearned; the mind cannot be idle; if it is not taken up with one thing, it attends to another through choice or necessity; and the degree of previous capacity in one class or another is a mere lottery.

LIII. Some things, it is true, are more prominent, and lead to more serious consequences than others, so as to excite a greater share of attention and applause. Public characters, authors, warriors, statesmen, &c. nearly monopolise public consideration in this way, and are apt to judge of their merit by the noise they make in the world. Yet none of these classes would be willing to make the rule absolute; for a favourite player gains as much applause as any of them. A poet stands a poor chance either of popularity with the vulgar, or influence with the great, against a fashionable opera-dancer or singer. Reputation or notoriety is not the stamp of merit. Certain professions, like certain situations, bring it into greater notice, but have, perhaps, no more to do with it than birth or fortune. Opportunity sometimes indeed 'throws a cruel sunshine on a fool.' I have known several celebrated men, and some of them have been persons of the weakest capacity; yet accident had lifted them into general notice, and probably will hand their memories down to posterity. There are names written in her immortal scroll at which FAME blushes!

LIV. The world judge of men by their ability in their profession, and we judge of ourselves by the same test; for it is that on which our success in life depends. Yet how often do our talents and pursuits lie in different directions! The best painters are not always the cleverest men; and an author who makes an unfavourable or doubtful impression on the public, may in himself be a person of rare and agreeable qualifications. One cause of this is affectation. We constantly aim at what we are least fit for, thwarting or despising our natural bent; so that our performances and our characters are unaccountably at variance.

LV. If a man is disliked by one woman, he will succeed with none. The sex (one and all) have the same secret, or *freemasonry*, in judging of men.

LVI. Any woman may act the part of a coquet successfully, who has the reputation without the scruples of modesty. If a woman passes the bounds of propriety for our sakes, and throws herself unblushingly at our heads, we conclude it is either from a sudden and violent liking, or from extraordinary merit on our parts, either of which is enough to turn any man's head, who has a single spark of gallantry or vanity in his composition.

LVII. The surest way to make ourselves agreeable to others is by seeming to think them so. If we appear fully sensible of their good qualities, they will not complain of the want of them in us.

LVIII. We often choose a friend as we do a mistress, for no particular excellence in themselves, but merely from some circumstance that flatters our self-love.

LIX. Silence is one great art of conversation. He is not a fool who knows when to hold his tongue; and a person may gain credit for sense, eloquence, wit, who merely says nothing to lessen the opinion which others have of these qualities in themselves.

LX. There are few things in which we deceive ourselves more than in the esteem we profess to entertain for our friends. It is little better than a piece of quackery. The truth is, we think of them as we please—that is, as *they* please or displease us. As long as we are in good humour with them, we see nothing but their good qualities; but no sooner do they offend us than we rip up all their bad ones (which we before made a secret of, even to ourselves) with double malice. He who but now was little less than an angel of light shall be painted in the blackest colours for a slip of the tongue, 'some trick not worth an egg,' for the slightest suspicion of offence given or received. We often bestow the most opprobrious epithets on our best friends, and retract them twenty times in the course of a day, while the man himself remains the same. In love, which is all rhapsody and passion, this is excusable; but in the ordinary intercourse of life, it is preposterous.

LXI. A man who is always defending his friends from the most trifling charges, will be apt to make other people their enemies.

LXII. There are those who see everything through a medium of enthusiasm or prejudice; and who therefore think, that to admit any blemish in a friend, is to compromise his character altogether. The instant you destroy their heated exaggerations, they feel that they have no other ground to stand upon.

LXIII. We are ridiculous enough in setting up for patterns of perfection ourselves, without becoming answerable for that of others. It is best to confine our absurdities at home.

LXIV. We do not like our friends the worse because they sometimes give us an opportunity to rail at them heartily. Their faults reconcile us to their virtues. Indeed, we never have much esteem or regard, except for those that we can afford to speak our minds of freely; whose follies vex us in proportion to our anxiety for their welfare, and who have plenty of redeeming points about them to balance their defects. When we 'spy abuses' of this kind, it is a wiser and more generous proceeding to give vent to our impatience and ill-humour, than to brood over it, and let it, by sinking into our minds, poison the very sources of our goodwill.

LXV. To come to an explanation with a friend is to do away half the cause of offence; as to declare the grounds of our complaints and chagrin to a third party, is tacitly to pass them over. Our not daring to hint at the infirmities of a friend implies that we are ashamed to own them, and that we can only hope to keep on good terms with him by being blind to his real character.

LXVI. It is well that there is no one without a fault; for he would not have a friend in the world. He would seem to belong to a different species.

LXVII. Even among actors, painters, &c. those who are the most perfect, are not always the most admired. It is those who strike by their inequalities, and whose faults and excellences keep up a perpetual warfare between the partizans on both sides, that are the most talked of and produce the greatest effect. Nothing is prominent that does not act as a foil to itself. Emery's acting was without a fault. This was all that was ever said about it. His merit was one of those things that nobody insisted on, because it was taken for granted. Mr. Kean agitates and almost convulses the public mind by contrary extremes. It is a question whether Raphael would have acquired so great a name, if his colouring had been equal to his drawing or expression. As it is, his figures stand out like a rock, severed from its base: while Correggio's are lost in their own beauty and sweetness. Whatever has not a mixture of imperfection in it, soon grows insipid, or seems 'stupidly good.'

LXVIII. I have known persons without a friend—never any one without some virtue. The virtues of the former conspired with their vices to make the whole world their enemies.

LXIX. The study of metaphysics has this advantage, at least—it promotes a certain integrity and uprightness of understanding, which is a cure for the spirit of lying. He who has devoted himself to the discovery of truth feels neither pride nor pleasure in the invention of falsehood, and cannot condescend to any such paltry expedient. If you find a person given to vulgar shifts and rhodomontade, and who at the same time tells you he is a metaphysician, do not believe him.

LXX. It is the mischief of the regular study of all art and science, that it proportionably unfits a man for those pursuits or emergencies in life, which require mere courage and promptitude. To any one who has found how difficult it is to arrive at truth or beauty, with all the pains and time he can bestow upon them, everything seems worthless that can be obtained by a mere assumption of the question, or putting a good face upon the matter. Let a man try to produce a fine picture, or to solve an abstruse problem by giving himself airs of self-importance, and see what he will make of it. But in the common intercourse of life, too much depends on this sort of assurance and quackery. This is the reason why scholars and other eminent men so often fail in what personally concerns themselves. They cannot take advantage of the follies of mankind; nor submit to arrive at the end they have in view by unworthy means. Those who cannot make the progress of a single step in a favourite study without infinite pains and preparation, scorn to carry the world before them, or to win the good opinion of any individual in it, by vapouring and impudence. Yet these last qualities often succeed without an atom of true desert; and 'fools rush in where angels fear to tread.' In nine cases out of ten, the mere sanguineness of our pursuit ensures success; but the having tasked our faculties as much as they will bear, does not tend to enhance our overweening opinion of ourselves. The labours of the mind, like the drudgery of the body, impair our animal spirits and alacrity. Those who have done nothing, fancy themselves capable of everything: while those who have exerted themselves to the utmost, only feel the limitation of their powers, and evince neither admiration of themselves nor triumph over others. Their work is still to do, and they have no time or disposition for *fooling*. This is the reason why the greatest men have the least appearance of it.

LXXI. Persons who pique themselves on their understanding are frequently reserved and haughty: persons who aim at wit are generally courteous and sociable. Those who depend at every turn on the applause of the company, must endeavour to conciliate the good opinion of others by every means in their power.

> ‘A jest’s prosperity lies in the ear
> Of him who hears it.’

If a habit of jesting lowers a man, it is to the level of humanity. Wit nourishes vanity; reason has a much stronger tincture of pride in it.

LXXII. Satirists gain the applause of others through fear, not through love.

LXXIII. Some persons can do nothing but ridicule others.

LXXIV. Parodists, like mimics, seize only on defects, or turn beauties into blemishes. They make bad writers and indifferent actors.

LXXV. People of the greatest gaiety of manners are often the dullest company imaginable. Nothing is so dreary as the serious conversation or writing of a professed wag. So the gravest persons, divines, mathematicians, and so on, make the worst and poorest jokes, puns, &c.

LXXVI. The expression of a Frenchman’s face is often as melancholy when he is by himself, as it is lively in conversation. The instant he ceases to talk, he becomes ‘quite chop-fallen.’

LXXVII. To point out defects, one would think it necessary to be equally conversant with beauties. But this is not the case. The best caricaturists cannot draw a common outline; nor the best comic actors speak a line of serious poetry without being laughed at. This may be perhaps accounted for in some degree by saying, that the perfection of the ludicrous implies that looseness or disjointedness of mind, which receives most delight and surprise from oddity and contrast, and which is naturally opposed to the steadiness and unity of feeling required for the serious, or the sublime and beautiful.

LXXVIII. Different persons have different limits to their capacity. Thus, some excel in one profession generally, such as acting; others in one department of it, as tragedy; others in one character only. Garrick was equally great in tragedy and comedy;

Mrs. Siddons only shone in tragedy; Russell could play nothing but Jerry Sneak.[1]

LXXIX. Comic actors have generally attempted tragedy first, and have a hankering after it to the last. It was the case with Weston, Shuter, Munden, Bannister, and even Liston. *Prodigious!* The mistake may perhaps be traced to the imposing *eclat* of tragedy, and the awe produced by the utter incapacity of such persons to know what to make of it.

LXXX. If we are not first, we may as well be last in any pursuit. To be *worst* is some kind of distinction, and implies, by the rule of contrary, that we ought to excel in some opposite quality. Thus, if any one has scarcely the use of his limbs, we may conceive it is from his having exercised his mind too much. We suppose that an awkward boy at school is a good scholar. So, if a man has a strong body, we compliment him with a weak mind, and *vice versâ*.

LXXXI. There is a natural principle of *antithesis* in the human mind. We seldom grant one excellence but we hasten to make up for it by a contrary defect, to keep the balance of criticism even. Thus we say, *Titian was a great colourist, but did not know how to draw*. The first is true: the last is a mere presumption from the first, like alternate rhyme and reason; or a compromise with the weakness of human nature, which soon tires of praise.

LXXXII. There is some reason for this cautious distribution of merit; for it is not necessary for one man to possess more than one quality in the highest perfection, since no one possesses all, and we are in the end forced to collect the idea of perfection in art from a number of different specimens. It is quite sufficient for any one person to do any one thing better than everybody else. Anything beyond this is like an impertinence. It was not necessary for Hogarth to paint his Sigismunda; nor for Mrs. Siddons to abridge Paradise Lost.

LXXXIII. On the stage none but originals can be counted as anything. The rest are 'men of no mark or likelihood.' They give us back the same impression we had before, and make it worse instead of better.

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[1] There is a pleasant instance of this mentioned in the Tatler. There was an actor of that day who could play nothing but the Apothecary in Romeo and Juliet. He succeeded so well in this, that he grew fat upon it, when he was set aside; and having then nothing to do, pined away till he became qualified for the part again, and had another run in it.

LXXXIV. It was ridiculous to set up Mr. Kean as a rival to Mr. Kemble. Whatever merits the first might have, they were of a totally different class, and could not possibly interfere with, much less injure those of his great predecessor. Mr. Kemble stood on his own ground, and he stood high on it. Yet there certainly was a *reaction* in this case. Many persons saw no defect in Mr. Kemble till Mr. Kean came, and then finding themselves mistaken in the abstract idea of perfection they had indulged in, were ready to give up their opinion altogether. When a man is a great favourite with the public, they incline by a natural spirit of exaggeration and love of the marvellous, to heap all sorts of perfections upon him, and when they find by another's excelling him in some one thing that this is not the case, they are disposed to strip their former idol, and leave him 'bare to weather.' Nothing is more unjust or capricious than public opinion.

LXXXV. The public have neither shame nor gratitude.

LXXXVI. Public opinion is the mixed result of the intellect of the community acting upon general feeling.

LXXXVII. Our friends are generally ready to do everything for us, except the very thing we wish them to do. There is one thing in particular they are always disposed to give us, and which we are as unwilling to take, namely, *advice*.

LXXXVIII. Good-nature is often combined with ill temper. Our own uncomfortable feelings teach us to sympathise with others, and to seek relief from our own uneasiness in the satisfactions we can afford them. Ill-nature combined with good temper is an unnatural and odious character. Our delight in mischief and suffering, when we have no provocation to it from being ill at ease ourselves, is wholly unpardonable. Yet I have known one or two instances of this sort of callous levity, and gay, laughing malignity. Such people 'poison in jest.'

LXXXIX. It is wonderful how soon men acquire talents for offices of trust and importance. The higher the situation, the higher the opinion it gives us of ourselves; and as is our confidence, so is our capacity. We *assume* an equality with circumstances.

XC. The difficulty is for a man to rise to high station, not to fill it; as it is easier to stand on an eminence than to climb up to it. Yet he alone is truly great who is so without the aid of circumstances and in spite of fortune, who is as little lifted up by the tide of opinion, as he is depressed by neglect or obscurity, and who borrows dignity only from himself. It is a fine compliment which Pope has paid to Lord Oxford—

> 'A soul supreme, in each hard instance tried,
> Above all pain, all passion, and all pride;
> The rage of power, the blast of public breath,
> The lust of lucre, and the dread of death!'

XCI. The most silent people are generally those who think most highly of themselves. They fancy themselves superior to every one else; and not being sure of making good their secret pretensions, decline entering the lists altogether. They thus 'lay the flattering unction to their souls,' that they could have said better things than others, or that the conversation was beneath them.

XCII. There are writers who never do their best; lest if they should fail, they should be left without excuse in their own opinion. While they trifle with a subject, they feel superior to it. They will not take pains, for this would be a test of what they are actually able to do, and set a limit to their pretensions, while their vanity is unbounded. The more you find fault with them, the more careless they grow, their affected indifference keeping pace with and acting as a shield against the disapprobation or contempt of others. They fancy whatever they condescend to write must be good enough for the public.

XCIII. Authors who acquire a high celebrity and conceal themselves, seem superior to fame. Producing great works *incognito* is like doing good by stealth. There is an air of magnanimity in it, which people wonder at. Junius, and the author of Waverley are striking examples. Junius, however, is really unknown; while the author of Waverley enjoys all the credit of his writings without acknowledging them. Let any one else come forward and claim them; and we should then see whether Sir Walter Scott would stand idle by. It is a curious argument that he cannot be the author, because the real author could not help making himself known; when, if he is not so, the real author has never even been hinted at, and lets another run away with all the praise.

XCIV. Some books have a *personal* character. We are attached to the work for the sake of the author. Thus we read WALTON'S ANGLER as we should converse with an agreeable old man, not for what he says, so much as for his manner of saying it, and the pleasure he takes in the subject.

XCV. Some persons are exceedingly shocked at the cruelty of Walton's Angler—as if the most humane could be expected to trouble themselves about fixing a worm on a hook, at a time when they burnt men at a stake 'in conscience and tender heart.' We are not to measure the feelings of one age by those of another. Had Walton lived in our day, he would have been the first to cry out against the cruelty of angling. As it was, his flies and baits were only a part of his tackle. *They* had not, at this period, the most distant idea of setting up as candidates for our sympathy! Man is naturally a savage, and emerges from barbarism by slow degrees. Let us take the streaks of light, and be thankful for them, as they arise and tinge the horizon one by one, and not complain because the noon is long after the dawn of refinement.

XCVI. Livery-servants (I confess it) are the only people I do not like to sit in company with. They offend not only by their own meanness, but by the ostentatious display of the pride of their masters.

XCVII. It has been observed, that the proudest people are not nice in love. In fact, they think they raise the object of their choice above every one else.

XCVIII. A proud man is satisfied with his own good opinion, and does not seek to make converts to it. Pride erects a little kingdom of its own, and acts as sovereign in it. Hence we see why some men are so proud they cannot be affronted, like kings who have no peer or equal.

XCIX. The proudest people are as soon repulsed as the most humble. The last are discouraged by the slightest objection or hint of their conscious incapacity, while the first disdain to enter into any competition, and resent whatever implies a doubt of their self-evident superiority to others.

C. What passes in the world for talent or dexterity or enterprise, is often only a want of moral principle. We may succeed where others fail, not from a greater share of invention, but from not being nice in the choice of expedients.

CI. Cunning is the art of concealing our own defects, and discovering other people's weaknesses. Or it is taking advantages of others which they do not suspect, because they are contrary to propriety and the settled practice. We feel no inferiority to a fellow who picks our pockets; though we feel mortified at being over-reached by trick and cunning. Yet there is no more reason for it in the one case than in the other. Any one may win at cards by cheating—*till he is found out*. We have been playing against odds. So any one may deceive us by lying, or take an unfair advantage of us, who is not withheld by a sense of shame or honesty from doing so.

CII. The completest hypocrites are so by nature. That is, they are without sympathy with others to distract their attention—or any of that nervous weakness, which might revolt or hesitate at the baseness of the means necessary to carry on their system of deception. You can no more tell what is passing in the minds of such people than if they were of a different species. They, in fact, are so as to all moral intents and purposes; and this is the advantage they have over you. You fancy there is a common link between you, while in reality there is none.

CIII. The greatest hypocrites are the greatest dupes. This is either because they think only of deceiving others and are off their guard, or because they really know little about the feelings or characters of others from their want of sympathy, and of consequent sagacity. Perhaps the resorting to trick and artifice in the first instance implies not only a callousness of feeling, but an obtuseness of intellect, which cannot get on by fair means. Thus a girl who is ignorant and stupid may yet have cunning enough to resort to silence as the only chance of conveying an opinion of her capacity.

CIV. The greatest talents do not generally attain to the highest stations. For though high, the ascent to them is narrow, beaten, and crooked. The path of genius is free, and its own. Whatever requires the concurrence and co-operation of others, must depend chiefly on routine and an attention to rules and *minutiæ*. Success in business is therefore seldom owing to uncommon talents or original power, which is untractable and selfwilled, but to the greatest degree of commonplace capacity.

CV. The error in the reasonings of Mandeville, Rochefoucault, and others, is this: they first find out that there is something mixed in the motives of all our actions, and they then proceed to argue, that they must all arise from one motive, *viz.* self-love. They make the exception the rule. It would be easy to reverse the argument, and prove that our most selfish actions are disinterested. There is honour among thieves. Robbers, murderers, &c. do not commit those actions, from a pleasure in pure villainy, or for their own benefit only, but from a mistaken regard to the welfare or good opinion of those with whom they are immediately connected.

CVI. It is ridiculous to say, that compassion, friendship, &c. are at bottom only selfishness in disguise, because it is *we* who feel pleasure or pain in the good or evil of others; for the meaning of self-love is not that it is I who love, but that I love myself. The motive is no more selfish because it is I who feel it, than the action is selfish because it is I who perform it. To prove a man selfish, it is not surely enough to say, that it is *he who feels* (this is a mere quibble) but to shew that he does not feel *for another*; that is, that the idea of the suffering or welfare of others does not excite any feeling whatever of pleasure or pain in his mind, except from some reference to or reflection on himself. Self-love or the love of self means, that I have an immediate interest in the contemplation of my own good, and that this is a motive to action; and benevolence or the love of others means in like manner, that I have an immediate interest in the idea of the good or evil that may befall them, and a disposition to assist them, in consequence. Self-love, in a word, is sympathy with myself, that is, it is I who feel it, and I who am the object of it: in benevolence or compassion, it is I who still feel sympathy, but another (not myself) is the object of it. If I feel sympathy with others at all, it must be disinterested. The pleasure it may give me is the consequence, not the cause, of my feeling it. To insist that sympathy is self-love because we cannot feel for others, without being ourselves affected pleasurably or painfully, is to make nonsense of the question; for it is to insist that in order to feel for others properly and truly, we must in the first place feel nothing. *C'est une mauvaise plaisanterie.* That the feeling exists in the individual must be granted, and never admitted of a question: the only question is, how that feeling is caused, and what is its object—and it is to express the two opinions that may be entertained on this subject, that the terms *self-love* and *benevolence* have been appropriated. Any other interpretation of them is an evident abuse of language, and a subterfuge in argument, which, driven from the fair field of fact and observation, takes shelter in verbal sophistry.

CVII. Humility and pride are not easily distinguished from each other. A proud man, who fortifies himself in his own good opinion, may be supposed not to put forward his pretensions through shyness or deference to others: a modest man, who is really reserved and afraid of committing himself, is thought distant and haughty: and the vainest coxcomb, who makes a display of himself and his most plausible qualifications, often does so to hide his deficiencies and to prop up his tottering opinion of himself by the applause of others. Vanity does not refer to the opinion a man entertains of himself, but to that which he wishes others to entertain of him. Pride is indifferent to the approbation of others; as modesty shrinks from it, either through bashfulness, or from an unwillingness to take any undue advantage of it. I have known several very forward, loquacious, and even overbearing persons, whose confidential communications were oppressive from the sense they entertained of their own demerits. In company they talked on in mere *bravado*, and for fear of betraying their weak side, as children make a noise in the dark.

CVIII. True modesty and true pride are much the same thing. Both consist in setting a just value on ourselves—neither more nor less. It is a want of proper spirit to fancy ourselves inferior to others in those things in which we really excel them. It is conceit and want of common-sense to arrogate a superiority over others, without the most well-founded pretensions.

CIX. A man may be justly accused of vanity and presumption, who either thinks he possesses qualifications which he has not, or greatly overrates those which he has. An egotist does not think well of himself because he possesses certain qualities, but fancies he possesses a number of excellences, because he thinks well of himself through mere idle self-complacency. True moderation is the bounding of our self-esteem within the extent of our acquirements.

CX. Conceit is the most contemptible and one of the most odious qualities in the world. It is vanity driven from all other shifts, and forced to appeal to itself for admiration. An author, whose play has been *damned* overnight, feels a paroxysm of conceit the next morning. Conceit may be defined as a restless, overweening, petty, obtrusive, mechanical delight in our own qualifications, without any reference to their real value, or to the approbation of others, merely because they are ours, and for no other reason whatever. It is the extreme of selfishness and folly.

CXI. Confidence or courage is conscious ability—the sense of power. No man is ever afraid of attempting what he knows he can do better than any one else. Charles Fox felt no diffidence in addressing the House of Commons: he was reserved and silent in company, and had no opinion of his talent for writing; that is, he knew his powers and their limits. The torrent of his eloquence rushed upon him from his knowledge of the subject and his interest in it, unchecked and unbidden, without his once thinking of himself or his hearers. As a man is strong, so is he bold. The thing is, that wherever we feel at home, there we are at our ease. The late Sir

John Moore once had to review the troops at Plymouth before the King; and while he was on the ground and had to converse with the different persons of the court, with the ladies, and with Mr. Pitt whom he thought a great man, he found himself a good deal embarrassed; but the instant he mounted his horse and the troops were put in motion, he felt quite relieved, and had leisure to observe what an awkward figure Mr. Pitt made on horseback.

CXII. The truly proud man knows neither superiors nor inferiors. The first he does not admit of: the last he does not concern himself about. People who are insolent to those beneath them crouch to those above them. Both shew equal meanness of spirit and want of conscious dignity.

CXIII. No elevation or success raises the humble man in his own opinion. To the proud the slightest repulse or disappointment is the last indignity. The vain man makes a merit of misfortune, and triumphs in his disgrace.

CXIV. We reserve our gratitude for the manner of conferring benefits; and we revolt against this, except when it seems to say we owe no obligation at all, and thus cancels the debt of gratitude as soon as it is incurred.

CXV. We do not hate those who injure us, if they do not at the same time wound our self-love. We can forgive any one sooner than those who lower us in our own opinion. It is no wonder, therefore, that we as often dislike others for their virtues as for their vices. We naturally hate whatever makes us despise ourselves.

CXVI. When you find out a man's ruling passion, beware of crossing him in it.

CXVII. We sometimes hate those who differ from us in opinion worse than we should for an attempt to injure us in the most serious point. A favourite theory is a possession for life; and we resent any attack upon it proportionably.

CXVIII. Men will die for an opinion as soon as for anything else. Whatever excites the spirit of contradiction, is capable of producing the last effects of heroism, which is only the highest pitch of obstinacy in a good or a bad cause, in wisdom or in folly.

CXIX. We are ready to sacrifice life, not only for our own opinion, but in deference to that of others. Conscience, or its shadow, honour, prevails over the fear of death. The man of fortune and fashion will throw away his life, like a bauble, to prevent the slightest breath of dishonour. So little are we governed by self-interest, and so much by imagination and sympathy.

CXX. The most impertinent people are less so from design than from inadvertence. I have known a person who could scarcely open his lips without offending some one, merely because he harboured no malice in his heart. A certain excess of animal spirits with thoughtless good-humour will often make more enemies than the most deliberate spite and ill-nature, which is on its guard, and strikes with caution and safety.

CXXI. It is great weakness to lay ourselves open to others, who are reserved towards us. There is not only no equality in it, but we may be pretty sure they will turn a confidence, which they are so little disposed to imitate, against us.

CXXII. A man has no excuse for betraying the secrets of his friends, unless he also divulges his own. He may then seem to be actuated not by treachery, but indiscretion.

CXXIII. As we scorn them who scorn us, so the contempt of the world (not seldom) makes men proud.

CXXIV. Even infamy may be oftentimes a source of secret self-complacency. We smile at the impotence of public opinion, when we can survive its worst censures.

CXXV. Simplicity of character is the natural result of profound thought.

CXXVI. The affected modesty of most women is a decoy for the generous, the delicate, and unsuspecting; while the artful, the bold, and unfeeling either see or break through its slender disguises.

CXXVII. We as often repent the good we have done as the ill.

CXXVIII. The measure of any man's virtue is what he would do, if he had neither the laws nor public opinion, nor even his own prejudices, to control him.

CXXIX. We like the expression of Raphael's faces without an edict to enforce it. I do not see why there should not be a taste in morals formed on the same principle.

CXXX. Where a greater latitude is allowed in morals, the number of examples of vice may increase, but so do those of virtue: at least, we are surer of the sincerity of the latter. It is only the exceptions to vice, that arise neither from ignorance nor hypocrisy, that are worth counting.

CXXXI. The fear of punishment may be necessary to the suppression of vice; but it also suspends the finer motives to virtue.

CXXXII. No wise man can have a contempt for the prejudices of others; and he should even stand in a certain awe of his own, as if they were aged parents and monitors. They may in the end prove wiser than he.

CXXXIII. We are only justified in rejecting prejudices, when we can explain the grounds of them; or when they are at war with nature, which is the strongest prejudice of all.

CXXXIV. Vulgar prejudices are those which arise out of accident, ignorance, or authority. Natural prejudices are those which arise out of the constitution of the human mind itself.

CXXXV. Nature is stronger than reason: for nature is, after all, the text, reason but the comment. He is indeed a poor creature who does not *feel* the truth of more than he *knows* or can explain satisfactorily to others.

CXXXVI. The mind revolts against certain opinions, as the stomach rejects certain foods.

CXXXVII. The drawing a certain positive line in morals, beyond which a single false step is irretrievable, makes virtue formal, and vice desperate.

CXXXVIII. Most codes of morality proceed on a supposition of *Original Sin*; as if the only object was to coerce the headstrong propensities to vice, and there were no natural disposition to good in the mind, which it was possible to improve, refine, and cultivate.

CXXXIX. This *negative* system of virtue leads to a very low style of moral sentiment. It is as if the highest excellence in a picture was to avoid gross defects in drawing; or in writing, instances of bad grammar. It ought surely to be our aim in virtue, as well as in other things, 'to snatch a grace beyond the reach of art.'

CXL. We find many things to which the prohibition of them constitutes the only temptation.

CXLI. There is neither so much vice nor so much virtue in the world, as it might appear at first sight that there is. Many people commit actions that they hate, as they affect virtues that they laugh at, merely because others do so.

CXLII. When the imagination is continually led to the brink of vice by a system of terror and denunciations, people fling themselves over the precipice from the mere dread of falling.

CXLIII. The maxim—*Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*—has not been fully explained. In general, it is taken for granted, that those things that our reason disapproves, we give way to from passion. Nothing like it. The course that persons in the situation of Medea pursue has often as little to do with inclination as with judgment: but they are led astray by some object of a disturbed imagination, that shocks their feelings and staggers their belief; and they grasp the phantom to put an end to this state of tormenting suspense, and to see whether it is human or not.

CXLIV. Vice, like disease, floats in the atmosphere.

CXLV. Honesty is one part of eloquence. We persuade others by being in earnest ourselves.

CXLVI. A mere sanguine temperament often passes for genius and patriotism.

CXLVII. Animal spirits are continually taken for wit and fancy; and the want of them, for sense and judgment.

CXLVIII. In public speaking, we must appeal either to the prejudices of others, or to the love of truth and justice. If we think merely of displaying our own ability, we shall ruin every cause we undertake.

CXLIX. Those who cannot miss an opportunity of saying a good thing or of bringing in some fantastical opinion of their own, are not to be trusted with the management of any great question.

CL. There are some public speakers who commit themselves and their party by extravagances uttered in heat and through vanity, which they retract in cold blood through cowardice and caution. They outrage propriety, and trim to self-interest.

CLI. An honest man is respected by all parties. We forgive a hundred rude or offensive things that are uttered from conviction or in the conscientious discharge of a duty—never one, that proceeds from design or with a view to raise the person who says it above us.

CLII. Truth from the mouth of an honest man, or severity from a good-natured one, has a double effect.

CLIII. A person who does not endeavour to *seem* more than he *is*, will generally be thought nothing of. We habitually make such large deductions for pretence and imposture, that no real merit will stand against them. It is necessary to set off our good qualities with a certain air of plausibility and self-importance, as some attention to fashion is necessary to decency.

CLIV. If we do not aspire to admiration, we shall fall into contempt. To expect sheer, evenhanded justice from mankind, is folly. They take the gross inventory of our pretensions; and not to have them overlooked entirely, we must place them in a conspicuous point of view, as men write their trades or fix a sign over the doors of their houses. Not to conform to the established practice in either respect, is false delicacy in the commerce of the world.

CLV. There has been a considerable change in dress and manners in the course of a century or two, as well as in the signs and badges of different professions. The streets are no longer encumbered with numberless emblems of mechanical or other occupations, nor crowded with the pomp and pageantry of dress, nor embroiled by the insolent airs assumed by the different candidates for rank and precedence. Our pretensions become less gross and obtrusive with the progress of society, and as the means of communication become more refined and general. The simplicity and even slovenliness of the modern beau form a striking contrast to the dazzling finery and ostentatious formality of the oldfashioned courtier; yet both are studied devices and symbols of distinction. It would be a curious speculation to trace the various modes of affectation in dress from the age of Elizabeth to the present time, in connection with the caprices of fashion, and the march of opinion; and to shew in what manner Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia* or Rousseau's Emilius have contributed to influence the gliding movements and curtail the costume of a modern *dandy*!

CLVI. Unlimited power is helpless, as arbitrary power is capricious. Our energy is in proportion to the resistance it meets. We can attempt nothing great, but from a sense of the difficulties we have to encounter: we can persevere in nothing great, but from a pride in overcoming them. Where our will is our law, we eagerly set about the first trifle we think of, and lay it aside for the next trifle that presents itself, or that is suggested to us. The character of despotism is apathy or levity—or the love of mischief, because the latter is easy and suits its pride and wantonness.

CLVII. Affectation is as necessary to the mind, as dress is to the body.

CLVIII. Man is an intellectual animal, and therefore an everlasting contradiction to himself. His senses centre in himself, his ideas reach to the ends of the universe; so that he is torn in pieces between the two, without a possibility of its ever being otherwise. A mere physical being, or a pure spirit, can alone be satisfied with itself.

CLIX. Our approbation of others has a good deal of selfishness in it. We like those who give us pleasure, however little they may wish for or deserve our esteem in return. We prefer a person with vivacity and high spirits, though bordering upon insolence, to the timid and pusillanimous; we are fonder of wit joined to malice, than of dullness without it. We have no great objection to receive a man who is a villain as our friend, if he has plausible exterior qualities; nay, we often take a pride in our harmless familiarity with him, as we might in keeping a tame panther; but we soon grow weary of the society of a good-natured fool who puts our patience to the test, or of an awkward clown who puts our pride to the blush.

CLX. We are fonder of visiting our friends in health than in sickness. We judge less favourably of their characters, when any misfortune happens to them; and a lucky hit, either in business or reputation, improves even their personal appearance in our eyes.

CLXI. An heiress, with a large fortune and a moderate share of beauty, easily rises into a reigning toast.

CLXII. One shining quality lends a lustre to another, or hides some glaring defect.

CLXIII. We are never so much disposed to quarrel with others as when we are dissatisfied with ourselves.

CLXIV. We are never so thoroughly tired of the company of any one else as we sometimes are of our own.

CLXV. People outlive the interest, which, at different periods of their lives, they take in themselves. When we forget old friends, it is a sign we have forgotten ourselves; or despise our former ways and notions, as much as we do their present ones.

CLXVI. We fancy ourselves superior to others, because we find that we have improved; and at no time did we think ourselves inferior to them.

CLXVII. The notice of others is as necessary to us as the air we breathe. If we cannot gain their good opinion, we change our battery, and strive to provoke their hatred and contempt.

CLXVIII. Some malefactors, at the point of death, confess crimes of which they have never been guilty, thus to raise our wonder and indignation in the same proportion; or to shew their superiority to vulgar prejudice, and brave that public opinion, of which they are the victims.

CLXIX. Others make an ostentatious display of their penitence and remorse, only to invite sympathy, and create a diversion in their own minds from the subject of their impending punishment. So that we excite a strong emotion in the breasts of others, we care little of what kind it is, or by what means we produce it. We have equally the feeling of power. The sense of insignificance or of being an object of perfect indifference to others, is the only one that the mind never covets nor willingly submits to.

CLXX. There are not wanting instances of those, who pass their whole lives in endeavouring to make themselves ridiculous. They only tire of their absurdities when others are tired of talking about and laughing at them, so that they have become a stale jest.

CLXXI. People in the grasp of death wish all the evil they have done (as well as all the good) to be known, not to make atonement by confession, but to excite one more strong sensation before they die, and to leave their interests and passions a legacy to posterity, when they themselves are exempt from the consequences.

CLXXII. We talk little, if we do not talk about ourselves.

CLXXIII. We may give more offence by our silence than even by impertinence.

CLXXIV. Obstinate silence implies either a mean opinion of ourselves or a contempt of our company: and it is the more provoking, as others do not know to which of these causes to attribute it, whether to humility or pride.

CLXXV. Silence proceeds either from want of something to say, or from a phlegmatic indifference which closes up our lips. The sea, or any other striking object, suddenly bursting on a party of mutes in a stage-coach, will occasion a general exclamation of surprise; and the ice being once broken, they may probably be good company for the rest of the journey.

CLXXVI. We compliment ourselves on our national reserve and taciturnity by abusing the loquacity and frivolity of the French.

CLXXVII. Nations, not being willing or able to correct their own errors, justify them by the opposite errors of other nations.

CLXXVIII. We easily convert our own vices into virtues, the virtues of others into vices.

CLXXIX. A person who talks with equal vivacity on every subject, excites no interest in any. *Repose* is as necessary in conversation as in a picture.

CLXXX. The best kind of conversation is that which may be called *thinking aloud*. I like very well to speak my mind on any subject (or to hear another do so) and to go into the question according to the degree of interest it naturally inspires, but not to have to get up a thesis upon every topic. There are those, on the other hand, who seem always to be practising on their audience, as if they mistook them for a DEBATING-SOCIETY, or to hold a general retainer, by which they are bound to explain every difficulty, and answer every objection that can be started. This, in private society and among friends, is not desirable. You thus lose the two great ends of conversation, which are to learn the sentiments of others, and see what they think of yours. One of the best talkers I ever knew had this defect—that he evidently seemed to be considering less what he felt on any point than what might be said upon it, and that he listened to you, not to weigh what you said, but to reply to it, like counsel on the other side. This habit gave a brilliant smoothness and polish to his general discourse, but, at the same time, took from its solidity and prominence: it reduced it to a tissue of lively, fluent, ingenious *commonplaces*, (for original genuine, observations are like 'minute drops from off the eaves,' and not an incessant shower) and, though his talent in this way was carried to the very extreme of cleverness, yet I think it seldom, if ever, went beyond it.

CLXXXI. Intellectual excellence can seldom be a source of much satisfaction to the possessor. In a gross period, or in vulgar society, it is not understood; and among those who are refined enough to appreciate its value, it ceases to be a distinction.

CLXXXII. There is, I think, an essential difference of character in mankind, between those who wish *to do*, and those who wish to *have* certain things. I observe persons expressing a great desire to possess fine horses, hounds, dress, equipage, &c. and an envy of those who have them. I myself have no such feeling, nor the least ambition to shine, except by doing something better than others. I have the love of power, but not of property. I should like to be able to outstrip a greyhound in speed; but I should be ashamed to take any merit to myself from possessing the fleetest greyhound in the world. I cannot transfer my personal identity from myself to what I merely call *mine*. The generality of mankind are contented to be estimated by what they possess, instead of what they are.

CLXXXIII. Buonaparte observes, that the diplomatists of the new school were no match for those brought up under the ancient *regime*. The reason probably is, that the modern style of intellect inclines to abstract reasoning and general propositions, and pays less attention to individual character, interests, and circumstances. The moderns have, therefore, less tact in watching the designs of others, and less closeness in hiding their own. They perhaps have a greater knowledge of things, but less of the world. They calculate the force of an argument, and rely on its success, moving *in vacuo*, without sufficiently allowing for the resistance of opinion and prejudice.

CLXXXIV. The most comprehensive reasoners are not always the deepest or nicest observers. They are apt to take things for granted too much, as parts of a system. Lord Egmont, in a speech in Parliament, in the year 1750, has the following remarkable observations on this subject. ‘It is not common-sense, but downright madness, to follow general principles in this wild manner without limitation or reserve; and give me leave to say one thing, which I hope will be long remembered, and well thought upon by all those who hear me—that those gentlemen who plume themselves thus upon their open and extensive understandings, are in fact, the men of the narrowest principles in the kingdom. For what is a narrow mind? It is a mind that sees any proposition in one single contracted point of view, unable to complicate any subject with the circumstances, or considerations, that are or may or ought to be combined with it. And pray, what is that understanding which looks upon the question of *naturalization* only in this general view, that naturalization is an increase of the people, and the increase of the people is the riches of the nation? Never admitting the least reflection, what the people are whom you let in upon us; how, in the present bad regulation of the police, they are to be employed or maintained; how their principles, opinions, or practice may influence the religion or politics of the state, or what operation their admission may have upon the peace and tranquillity of the country. Is not such a genius equally contemptible and narrow with that of the poorest mortal upon earth, who grovels for his whole life within the verge of the opposite extreme?'

CLXXXV. In an Englishman, a diversity of profession and pursuit (as the having been a soldier, a valet, a player, &c.) implies a dissipation and dissoluteness of character, and a fitness for nothing. In a Frenchman, it only shews a natural vivacity of disposition, and a fitness for everything.

CLXXXVI. Impudence, like everything else, has its limits. Let a man be ever so hardened and unblushing, there is a point at which his courage is sure to fail him; and not being able to carry off the matter with his usual air of confidence, he becomes more completely confused and awkward than any one else would in the same circumstances.

CLXXXVII. Half the miseries of human life proceed from our not perceiving the incompatibility of different attainments, and consequently aiming at too much. We make ourselves wretched in vainly aspiring after advantages we are deprived of; and do not consider that if we had these advantages, it would be quite impossible for us to retain those which we actually do possess, and which, after all, if it were put to the question, we would not consent to part with for the sake of any others.

CLXXXVIII. If we use no ceremony towards others, we shall be treated without any. People are soon tired of paying trifling attentions to those who receive them with coldness, and return them with neglect.

CLXXXIX. Surly natures have more pleasure in disobliging others than in serving themselves.

CXC. People in general consult their prevailing humour or ruling passion (whatever it may be) much more than their interest.

CXCI. One of the painters (Teniers,) has represented monkeys with a monk's cloak and cowl. This has a ludicrous effect enough.

To a superior race of beings the pretensions of mankind to extraordinary sanctity and virtue must seem equally ridiculous.

CXCII. When we speak ill of people behind their backs, and are civil to them to their faces, we may be accused of insincerity. But the contradiction is less owing to insincerity than to the change of circumstances. We think well of them while we are with them; and in their absence recollect the ill we durst not hint at or acknowledge to ourselves in their presence.

CXCIII. Our opinions are not our own, but in the power of sympathy. If a person tells us a palpable falsehood, we not only dare not contradict him, but we dare hardly disbelieve him *to his face*. A lie boldly uttered has the effect of truth for the instant.

CXCIV. A man's reputation is not in his own keeping, but lies at the mercy of the profligacy of others. Calumny requires no proof. The throwing out malicious imputations against any character leaves a stain, which no after-reputation can wipe out. To create an unfavourable impression, it is not necessary that certain things should be *true*, but that they *have been said*. The imagination is of so delicate a texture, that even words wound it.

CXCV. A nickname is a mode of insinuating a prejudice against another under some general designation, which, as it offers no proof, admits of no reply.

CXCVI. It does not render the person less contemptible or ridiculous in vulgar opinion, because it may be harmless in itself, or even downright nonsense. By repeating it incessantly, and leaving out every other characteristic of the individual, whom we wish to make a bye-word of, it seems as if he were an abstraction of insignificance.

CXCVII. Want of principle is power. Truth and honesty set a limit to our efforts, which impudence and hypocrisy easily overleap.

CXCVIII. There are many who talk on from ignorance, rather than from knowledge; and who find the former an inexhaustible fund of conversation.

CXCIX. Nothing gives such a blow to friendship as the detecting another in an untruth: it strikes at the root of our confidence ever after.

CC. In estimating the value of an acquaintance or even friend, we give a preference to intellectual or convivial over moral qualities.

The truth is, that in our habitual intercourse with others, we much oftener require to be amused than assisted. We consider less, therefore, what a person with whom we are intimate is ready to do for us in critical emergencies, than what he has to say on ordinary occasions. We dispense with his services, if he only saves us from *ennui.* In civilised society, words are of as much importance as things.

CCI. We cultivate the society of those who are above us in station, and beneath us in capacity. The one we do from choice, the other from necessity. Our interest dictates our submission to the first; our vanity is flattered by the homage of the last.

CCII. A man of talents, who shrinks from a collision with his equals or superiors, will soon sink below himself. We improve by trying our strength with others, not by shewing it off. A person who shuts himself up in a little circle of dependants and admirers for fear of losing ground in his own opinion by jostling with the world at large, may continue to be gaped at by fools, but will forfeit the respect of sober and sensible men.

CCIII. There are others, who entertaining a high opinion of themselves, and not being able (for want of plausible qualities) to gather a circle of butterflies round them, retire into solitude, and there worship the ECHOES and themselves. They gain this advantage by it—the ECHOES do not contradict them. But it is a question, whether by dwelling always on their own virtues and merits, unmolested, they increase the stock. They, indeed, pamper their ruling vices, and pile them mountain-high; and looking down on the world from the elevation of their retreat, idly fancy that the world has nothing to do but to look up to them with wondering-eyes.

CCIV. It is a false principle, that because we are entirely occupied with ourselves, we must equally occupy the thoughts of others. The contrary inference is the fair one.

CCV. It is better to desire than to enjoy—to love than to be loved.

CCVI. Every one would rather be Raphael than Hogarth. Without entering into the question of the talent required for their different works, or the pleasure derived from them, we prefer that which confers dignity on human nature to that which degrades it. We would wish to *do* what we would wish to *be.* And, moreover, it is most difficult to do what it is most difficult to be.

CCVII. A selfish feeling requires less moral capacity than a benevolent one: a selfish expression requires less intellectual capacity to execute it than a benevolent one; for in expression, and all that relates to it, the intellectual is the reflection of the moral. Raphael's figures are sustained by *ideas*: Hogarth's are distorted by mechanical habits and instincts. It is elevation of thought that gives grandeur and delicacy of expression to passion. The expansion and refinement of the soul are seen in the face as in a mirror. An enlargement of purpose gives a corresponding enlargement of form. The *mind*, as it were, acts over the whole body, and animates it equally; while petty and local interests seize on particular parts, and distract it by contrary and mean expressions. Now, if mental expression has this superior grandeur and grace, we can account at once for the superiority of Raphael. For there is no doubt, that it is more difficult to give a whole continuously and proportionably than to give the parts separate and disjointed, or to diffuse the same subtle but powerful expression over a large mass than to caricature it in a single part or feature. The actions in Raphael are like a branch of a tree swept by the surging blast; those in Hogarth like straws whirled and twitched about in the gusts and eddies of passion. I do not mean to say that goodness alone constitutes greatness, but mental power does. Hogarth's Good Apprentice is insipid: Raphael has clothed Elymas the Sorcerer with all the dignity and grandeur of vice. Selfish characters and passions borrow greatness from the range of imagination, and strength of purpose; and besides, have an advantage in natural force and interest.

CCVIII. We find persons who are actuated in all their tastes and feelings by a spirit of contradiction. They like nothing that other people do, and have a natural aversion to whatever is agreeable in itself. They read books that no one else reads; and are delighted with passages that no one understands but themselves. They only arrive at beauties through faults and difficulties; and all their conceptions are brought to light by a sort of Cæsarean process. This is either an affectation of singularity; or a morbid taste, that can relish nothing that is obvious and simple.

CCIX. An unaccountable spirit of contradiction is sometimes carried into men's behaviour and actions. They never do anything from a direct motive, or in a straightforward manner. They get rid of all sorts of obligations, and rush on destruction without the shadow of an excuse. They take a perverse delight in acting not only contrary to reason, but in opposition to their own inclinations and passions, and are for ever in a state of cross-purposes with themselves.

CCX. There are some persons who never decide from deliberate motives at all, but are the mere creatures of impulse.

CCXI. Insignificant people are a necessary relief in society. Such characters are extremely agreeable, and even favourites, if they appear satisfied with the part they have to perform.

CCXII. Little men seldom seem conscious of their diminutive size; or make up for it by the erectness of their persons, or a peculiarly dapper air and manner.

CCXIII. Any one is to be pitied, who has just sense enough to perceive his deficiencies.

CCXIV. I had rather be deformed than a dwarf and well-made. The one may be attributed to accident; the other looks like a deliberate insult on the part of nature.

CCXV. Personal deformity, in the well-disposed, produces a fine placid expression of countenance; in the ill-tempered and peevish, a keen, sarcastic one.

CCXVI. People say ill-natured things without design, but not without having a pleasure in them.

CCXVII. A person who blunders upon system, has a secret motive for what he does, unknown to himself.

CCXVIII. If any one by his general conduct contrives to part friends, he may not be aware that such is the tendency of his actions, but assuredly it is their motive. He has more pleasure in seeing others cold and distant, than cordial and intimate.

CCXIX. A person who constantly meddles to no purpose, means to do harm, and is not sorry to find he has succeeded.

CCXX. Cunning is natural to mankind. It is the sense of our weakness, and an attempt to effect by concealment what we cannot do openly and by force.

CCXXI. In love we never think of moral qualities, and scarcely of intellectual ones. Temperament and manner alone (with beauty) excite love.

CCXXII. There is no one thoroughly despicable. We cannot descend much lower than an ideot; and an ideot has some advantages over a wise man.

CCXXIII. Comparisons are odious, because they reduce every one to a standard he ought not to be tried by, or leave us in possession only of those claims which we can set up, to the entire exclusion of others. By striking off the common qualities, the remainder of excellence is brought down to a contemptible fraction. A man may be six feet high, and only an inch taller than another. In comparisons, this difference of an inch is the only thing thought of or ever brought into question. The greatest genius or virtue soon dwindles into nothing by such a mode of computation.

CCXXIV. It is a fine remark of Rousseau's, that the best of us differ from others in fewer particulars than we agree with them in. The difference between a tall and a short man is only a few inches, whereas they are both several feet high. So a wise or learned man knows many things, of which the vulgar are ignorant; but there is a still greater number of things, the knowledge of which they share in common with him.

CCXXV. I am always afraid of a fool. One cannot be sure that he is not a knave as well.

CCXXVI. Weakness has its hidden resources, as well as strength. There is a degree of folly and meanness which we cannot calculate upon, and by which we are as much liable to be foiled, as by the greatest ability or courage.

CCXXVII. We can only be degraded in a contest with low natures. The advantages that others obtain over us are fair and honourable to both parties.

CCXXVIII. Reflection makes men cowards. There is no object that can be put in competition with life, unless it is viewed through the medium of passion, and we are hurried away by the impulse of the moment.

CCXXIX. The youth is better than the old age of friendship.

CCXXX. In the course of a long acquaintance we have repeated all our good things, and discussed all our favourite topics several times over, so that our conversation becomes a mockery of social intercourse. We might as well talk to ourselves. The soil of friendship is worn out with constant use. Habit may still attach us to each other, but we feel ourselves fettered by it. Old friends might be compared to old married people without the tie of children.

CCXXXI. We grow tired of ourselves, much more of other people. Use may in part reconcile us to our own tediousness, but we do not adopt that of others on the same paternal principle. We may be willing to tell a story twice, never to hear one more than once.

CCXXXII. If we are long absent from our friends, we forget them: if we are constantly with them, we despise them.

CCXXXIII. There are no rules for friendship. It must be left to itself; we cannot force it any more than love.

CCXXXIV. The most violent friendships soonest wear themselves out.

CCXXXV. To be capable of steady friendship or lasting love, are the two greatest proofs, not only of goodness of heart, but of strength of mind.

CCXXXVI. It makes us proud when our love of a mistress is returned: it ought to make us prouder that we can love her for herself alone, without the aid of any such selfish reflection. This is the religion of love.

CCXXXVII. An English officer who had been engaged in an intrigue in Italy, going home one night, stumbled over a man fast asleep on the stairs. It was a bravo who had been hired to assassinate him. Such, in this man, was the force of conscience!

CCXXXVIII. An eminent artist having succeeded in a picture which drew crowds to admire it, received a letter from a shuffling old relation in these terms, 'Dear Cousin, now you may draw good bills with a vengeance.' Such is the force of habit! This man only wished to be a Raphael that he might carry on his old trade of drawing bills.

CCXXXIX. Mankind are a herd of knaves and fools. It is necessary to join the crowd, or get out of their way, in order not to be trampled to death by them.

CCXL. To think the worst of others, and to do the best we can ourselves, is a safe rule, but a hard one to practise.

CCXLI. To think ill of mankind and not wish ill to them, is perhaps the highest wisdom and virtue.

CCXLII. We may hate and love the same person, nay even at the same moment.

CCXLIII. We never hate those whom we have once loved, merely because they have injured us. ‘We may kill those of whom we are jealous,’ says Fielding, ‘but we do not hate them.’ We are enraged at their conduct and at ourselves as the objects of it, but this does not alter our passion for them. The reason is, we loved them without their loving us; we do not hate them because they hate us. Love may turn to indifference with possession, but is irritated by disappointment.

CCXLIV. Revenge against the object of our love is madness. No one would kill the woman he loves, but that he thinks he can bring her to life afterwards. Her death seems to him as momentary as his own rash act. *See Othello.*—‘My wife! I have no wife,’ &c. He stabbed not at her life, but at her falsehood; he thought to kill the wanton, and preserve the wife.

CCXLV. We revenge in haste and passion: we repent at leisure and from reflection.

CCXLVI. By retaliating our sufferings on the heads of those we love, we get rid of a present uneasiness, and incur lasting remorse. With the accomplishment of our revenge our fondness returns; so that we feel the injury we have done them, even more than they do.

CCXLVII. I think men formerly were more jealous of their rivals in love—they are now more jealous of their mistresses, and lay the blame on them. That is, we formerly thought more of the mere possession of the person, which the removal of a favoured lover prevented, and we now think more of a woman’s affections, which may still follow him to the tomb. To kill a rival is to kill a fool; but the Goddess of our idolatry may be a sacrifice worthy of the Gods. Hackman did not think of shooting Lord Sandwich, but Miss Ray.

CCXLVIII. Many people in reasoning on the passions make a continual appeal to common sense. But passion is without common sense, and we must frequently discard the one in speaking of the other.

CCXLIX. It is provoking to hear people at their ease talking reason to others in a state of violent suffering. If you can remove their suffering by speaking a word, do so; and then they will be in a state to hear calm reason.

CCL. There is nothing that I so hate as I do to hear a commonplace set up against a feeling of truth and nature.

CCLI. People try to reconcile you to a disappointment in love, by asking why you should cherish a passion for an object that has proved itself worthless. Had you known this before, you would not have encouraged the passion; but that having been once formed, knowledge does not destroy it. If we have drank poison, finding it out does not prevent its being in our veins: so passion leaves its poison in the mind! It is the nature of all passion and of all habitual affection; we throw ourselves upon it at a venture, but we cannot return by choice. If it is a wife that has proved unworthy, men compassionate the loss, because there is a tie, they say, which we cannot get rid of. But has the heart no ties? Or if it is a child, they understand it. But is not true love a child? Or when another has become a part of ourselves, 'where we must live or have no life at all,' can we tear them from us in an instant?—No: these bargains are for life; and that for which our souls have sighed for years, cannot be forgotten with a breath, and without a pang.

CCLII. Besides, it is uncertainty and suspense that chiefly irritate jealousy to madness. When we know our fate, we become gradually reconciled to it, and try to forget a useless sorrow.

CCLIII. It is wonderful how often we see and hear of Shakspeare's plays without being annoyed with it. Were it any other writer, we should be sick to death of the very name. But his volumes are like that of nature, we can turn to them again and again:

> 'Age cannot wither, nor custom stale
> His infinite variety.'

CCLIV. The contempt of a wanton for a man who is determined to think her virtuous, is perhaps the strongest of all others. He officiously reminds her of what she ought to be; and she avenges the galling sense of lost character on the fool who still believes in it.

CCLV. To find that a woman whom we loved has forfeited her character, is the same thing as to learn that she is dead.

CCLVI. The only vice that cannot be forgiven is hypocrisy. The repentance of a hypocrite is itself hypocrisy.

CCLVII. Once a renegado, and always a renegado.

CCLVIII. By speaking truth to the really beautiful, we learn to flatter other women.

CCLIX. There is a kind of ugliness which is not disagreeable to women. It is that which is connected with the expression of strong but bad passions, and implies spirit and power.

CCLX. People do not persist in their vices because they are not weary of them, but because they cannot leave them off. It is the nature of vice to leave us no resource but in itself.

CCLXI. Our consciousness of injustice makes us add to the injury. By aggravating a wrong, we seem to ourselves to justify it. The repetition of the blow inflames our passion and deadens reflection.

CCLXII. In confessing the greatest offences, a criminal gives himself credit for his candour. You and he seem to have come to an amicable understanding on his character at last.

CCLXIII. A barefaced profligacy often succeeds to an over-strained preciseness in morals. People in a less licentious age carefully conceal the vices they have; as they afterwards, with an air of philosophic freedom, set up for those they have not.

CCLXIV. It is a sign that real religion is in a state of decay, when passages in compliment to it are applauded at the theatre. Morals and sentiment fall within the province of the stage; but religion, except where it is considered as a beautiful fiction which ought to be treated with lenity, does not depend upon our suffrages.

CCLXV. There are persons to whom success gives no satisfaction, unless it is accompanied with dishonesty. Such people willingly ruin themselves in order to ruin others.

CCLXVI. Habitual liars invent falsehoods, not to gain any end or even to deceive their hearers, but to amuse themselves. It is partly practice and partly habit. It requires an effort in them to speak truth.

CCLXVII. A knave thinks himself a fool, all the time he is not making a fool of some other person.

CCLXVIII. Fontenelle said, 'If his hand were full of truths, he would not open his fingers to let them out.' Was this a satire on truth or on mankind?

CCLXIX. The best kind of conversation is that which is made up of observations, reflections, and anecdotes. A string of stories without application is as tiresome as a long-winded argument.

CCLXX. The most insignificant people are the most apt to sneer at others. They are safe from reprisals, and have no hope of rising in their own esteem, but by lowering their neighbours. The severest critics are always those, who have either never attempted, or who have failed in original composition.

CCLXXI. More remarks are made upon any one's dress, looks, &c. in walking twenty yards along the streets of Edinburgh, or other provincial towns, than in passing from one end of London to the other.

CCLXXII. There is less impertinence and more independence in London than in any other place in the kingdom.

CCLXXIII. A man who meets thousands of people in a day who never saw or heard of him before, if he thinks at all, soon learns to think little of himself. London is the place where a man of sense is soonest cured of his coxcombry, or where a fool may indulge his vanity with impunity, by giving himself what airs he pleases. A valet and a lord are there nearly on a level. Among a million of men, we do not count the units, for we have not time.

CCLXXIV. There is some virtue in almost every vice, except hypocrisy; and even that, while it is a mockery of virtue, is at the same time a compliment to it.

CCLXXV. It does not follow that a man is a hypocrite, because his actions give the lie to his words. If he at one time seems a saint, and at other times a sinner, he possibly is both in reality, as well as in appearance. A person may be fond of vice and of virtue too; and practise one or the other, according to the temptation of the moment. A priest may be pious, and a sot or bigot. A woman may be modest, and a rake at heart. A poet may admire the beauties of nature, and be envious of those of other writers. A moralist may act contrary to his own precepts, and yet be sincere in recommending them to others. These are indeed contradictions, but they arise out of the contradictory qualities in our nature. A man is a hypocrite only when he affects to take a delight in what he does not feel, not because he takes a perverse delight in opposite things.

CCLXXVI. The greatest offence against virtue is to speak ill of it. To recommend certain things is worse than to practise them. There may be an excuse for the last in the frailty of passion; but the former can arise from nothing but an utter depravity of disposition. Any one may yield to temptation, and yet feel a sincere love and aspiration after virtue; but he who maintains vice in theory, has not even the idea or capacity for virtue in his mind. Men err: fiends only make a mock at goodness.

CCLXXVII. The passions make antitheses and subtle distinctions, finer than any pen.

CCLXXVIII. I used to think that men were governed by their passions more than by their interest or reason, till I heard the contrary maintained in Scotland, *viz.* that the *main-chance* is the great object in life, and the proof given of it was, that every man in the street where we were talking, however he might have a particular *hobby*, minded his business as the principal thing, and endeavoured to make both ends meet at the end of the year. This was a shrewd argument, and it was Scotch. I could only answer it in my own mind by turning to different persons among my acquaintance who have been ruined with their eyes open by some whim or fancy. One, for instance, married a girl of the town: a second divorced his wife to marry a wench at a lodging-house, who refused him, and whose cruelty and charms are the torment of his own life, and that of all his friends: a third drank himself to death: a fourth is the dupe and victim of quack advertisements: a fifth is the slave of his wife's ill-humour: a sixth quarrels with all his friends without any motive: a seventh lies on to the end of the chapter, and to his own ruin, &c. It is true none of these are Scotchmen; and yet they live in houses, rather than in the open air, and follow some trade or vocation to avoid starving outright. If this is what is meant by a calculation of consequences, the doctrine may hold true; but it does not infringe upon the main point. It affects the husk, the shell, but not the kernel of our dispositions. The pleasure or torment of our lives is in the pursuit of some favourite passion or perverse humour.

> 'Within our bosoms reigns another lord,
> *Passion*, sole judge and umpire of itself.'

CCLXXIX. There are few things more contemptible than the conversation of men of the town. It is made up of the technicalities and cant of all professions, without the spirit or knowledge of any. It is flashy and vapid, and is like the rinsings of different liquors at a night-cellar, instead of a bottle of fine old port. It is without clearness or body, and a heap of affectation.

CCLXXX. The conversation of players is either dull or bad. They are tempted to say gay or fine things from the habit of uttering them with applause on the stage, and unable to do it from the habit of repeating what is set down for them by rote. A good comic actor, if he is a sensible man, will generally be silent in company. It is not his profession to invent *bon mots*, but to deliver them; and he will scorn to produce a theatrical effect by grimace and mere vivacity. A great tragic actress should be a *mute*, except on the stage. She cannot raise the tone of common conversation to that of tragedy, and any other must be quite insipid to her. Repose is necessary to her. She who died the night before in Cleopatra, ought not to revive till she appears again as Cassandra or Aspasia. In the intervals of her great characters, her own should be a blank, or an unforced, unstudied part.

CCLXXXI. To marry an actress for the admiration she excites on the stage, is to imitate the man who bought PUNCH.

CCLXXXII. To expect an author to talk as he writes is ridiculous; or even if he did, you would find fault with him as a pedant. We should *read* authors, and not converse with them.

CCLXXXIII. Extremes meet. Excessive refinement is often combined with equal grossness. They act as a relief to each other, and please by contrast.

CCLXXXIV. The seeds of many of our vices are sown in our blood: others we owe to the bile or a fit of indigestion. A sane mind is generally the effect of a sane body.

CCLXXXV. Health and good temper are the two greatest blessings in life. In all the rest, men are equal, or find an equivalent.

CCLXXXVI. Poverty, labour, and calamity are not without their luxuries; which the rich, the indolent, and the fortunate, in vain seek for.

CCLXXXVII. Good and ill seem as necessary to human life as light and shade are to a picture. We grow weary of uniform success, and pleasure soon surfeits. Pain makes ease delightful; hunger relishes the homeliest food, fatigue turns the hardest bed to down; and the difficulty and uncertainty of pursuit in all cases enhance the value of possession. The wretched are in this respect fortunate, that they have the strongest yearnings after happiness; and to desire is in some sense to enjoy. If the schemes of Utopians could be realised, the tone of society would be changed from what it is, into a sort of insipid high life. There could be no fine tragedies written; nor would there be any pleasure in seeing them. We tend to this conclusion already with the progress of civilisation.

CCLXXXVIII. The pleasure derived from tragedy is to be accounted for in this way, that, by painting the extremes of human calamity, it by contrast kindles the affections, and raises the most intense imagination and desire of the contrary good.

CCLXXXIX. The question respecting dramatic illusion has not been fairly stated. There are different degrees and kinds of belief. The point is not whether we do or do not believe what we see to be a positive reality, but how far and in what manner we believe in it. We do not say every moment to ourselves, 'This is real:' but neither do we say every moment, 'This is not real.' The involuntary impression steals upon us till we recollect ourselves. The appearance of reality, in fact, is the reality, so long and in as far as we are not conscious of the contradictory circumstances that disprove it. The belief in a well-acted tragedy never amounts to what the witnessing the actual scene would prove, and never sinks into a mere phantasmagoria. Its power of affecting us is not, however, taken away, even if we abstract the feeling of identity; for it still suggests a stronger idea of what the reality *would be*, just as a picture reminds us more powerfully of the person for whom it is intended, though we are conscious it is not the same.

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CCXC. We have more faith in a well-written romance, while we are reading it, than in common history. The vividness of the representations in the one case, more than counterbalances the mere knowledge of the truth of the facts in the other.

CCXCI. It is remarkable how virtuous and generously disposed every one is at a play. We uniformly applaud what is right and condemn what is wrong, when it costs us nothing but the sentiment.

CCXCII. Great natural advantages are seldom combined with great acquired ones, because they render the labour required to attain the last superfluous and irksome. It is only necessary to be admired; and if we are admired for the graces of our persons, we shall not be at much pains to adorn our minds. If Pope had been a beautiful youth, he would not have written The Rape of the Lock.[1] A beautiful woman, who has only to shew herself to be admired, and is famous by nature, will be in no danger of becoming a *bluestocking*, to attract notice by her learning, or to hide her defects.

CCXCIII. Those people who are always *improving*, never become great. Greatness is an eminence, the ascent to which is steep and lofty, and which a man must seize on at once by natural boldness and vigour, and not by patient, wary steps.

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[1] Milton was a beautiful youth, and yet he wrote Paradise Lost.

CCXCIV. The late Mr. Opie remarked, that an artist often put his best thoughts into his first works. His earliest efforts were the result of the study of all his former life, whereas his later and more mature performances (though perhaps more skilful and finished) contained only the gleanings of his after-observation and experience.

CCXCV. The effort necessary to overcome difficulty urges the student on to excellence. When he can once do well with ease, he grows comparatively careless and indifferent, and makes no farther advances to perfection.

CCXCVI. When a man can do better than every one else in the same walk, he does not make any very painful exertions to outdo himself. The progress of improvement ceases nearly at the point where competition ends.

CCXCVII. We are rarely taught by our own experience; and much less do we put faith in that of others.

CCXCVIII. We do not attend to the advice of the sage and experienced, because we think they are old, forgetting that they once were young, and placed in the same situations as ourselves.

CCXCIX. We are egotists in morals as well as in other things. Every man is determined to judge for himself as to his conduct in life, and finds out what he ought to have done, when it is too late to do it. For this reason, the world has to begin again with each successive generation.

CCC. We should be inclined to pay more attention to the wisdom of the old, if they shewed greater indulgence to the follies of the young.

CCCI. The best lesson we can learn from witnessing the folly of mankind is not to irritate ourselves against it.

CCCII. If the world were good for nothing else, it is a fine subject for speculation.

CCCIII. In judging of individuals, we always allow something to *character*; for even when this is not agreeable or praiseworthy, it affords exercise for our sagacity, and baffles the harshness of our censure.

CCCIV. There are persons to whom we never think of applying the ordinary rules of judging. They form a class by themselves and are curiosities in morals, like non-descripts in natural history. We forgive whatever they do or say, for the singularity of the thing, and because it excites attention. A man who has been hanged, is not the worse subject for dissection; and a man who deserves to be hanged, may be a very amusing companion or topic of discourse.

CCCV. Every man, in his own opinion, forms an exception to the ordinary rules of morality.

CCCVI. No man ever owned to the title of a *murderer*, a *tyrant*, &c. because, however notorious the facts might be, the epithet is accompanied with a reference to motives and marks of opprobrium in common language and in the feelings of others, which he does not acknowledge in his own mind.

CCCVII. There are some things, the *idea* of which alone is a clear gain to the human mind. Let people rail at virtue, at genius and friendship as long as they will—the very *names* of these disputed qualities are better than anything else that could be substituted for them, and embalm even the most angry abuse of them.

CCCVIII. If goodness were only a theory, it were a pity it should be lost to the world.

CCCIX. Were good and evil ever so nearly balanced in reality, yet imagination would add a casting-weight to the favourable scale, by anticipating the bright side of what is to come, and throwing a pleasing melancholy on the past.

CCCX. Women, when left to themselves, talk chiefly about their dress: they think more about their lovers than they talk about them.

CCCXI. With women, the great business of life is love; and they generally make a mistake in it. They consult neither the heart nor the head, but are led away by mere humour and fancy. If instead of a companion for life, they had to choose a partner in a country-dance or to trifle away an hour with, their mode of calculation would be right. They tie their true-lover's knots with idle, thoughtless haste, while the institutions of society render it indissoluble.

CCCXII. When we hear complaints of the wretchedness or vanity of human life, the proper answer to them would be that there is hardly any one who at some time or other *has not been in love.* If we consider the high abstraction of this feeling, its depth, its purity, its voluptuous refinement, even in the meanest breast, how sacred and how sweet it is, this alone may reconcile us to the lot of humanity. That drop of balm turns the bitter cup to a delicious nectar—

> 'And vindicates the ways of God to man.'

CCCXIII. It is impossible to love entirely, without being loved again. Otherwise, the fable of Pygmalion would have no meaning. Let any one be ever so much enamoured of a woman who does not requite his passion, and let him consider what he feels when he finds her scorn or indifference turning to mutual regard, the thrill, the glow of rapture, the melting of two hearts into one, the creation of another self in her—and he will own that he was before only half in love!

CCCXIV. Women never reason, and therefore they are (comparatively) seldom wrong. They judge instinctively of what falls under their immediate observation or experience, and do not trouble themselves about remote or doubtful consequences. If they make no profound discoveries, they do not involve themselves in gross absurdities. It is only by the help of reason and logical inference, according to Hobbes, that 'man becomes excellently wise, or excellently foolish.'[1]

CCCXV. Women are less cramped by circumstances or education than men. They are more the creatures of nature and impulse, and less cast in the mould of habit or prejudice. If a young man and woman in common life are seen walking out together on a holiday, the girl has the advantage in point of air and dress. She has a greater aptitude in catching external accomplishments and the manners of her superiors, and is less depressed by a painful consciousness of her situation in life. A Quaker girl is often as sensible and conversable as any other woman: while a Quaker man is a bundle of quaint opinions and conceit. Women are not spoiled by education and an affectation of superior wisdom. They take their chance for wit and shrewdness, and pick up their advantages, according to their opportunities and turn of mind. Their faculties (such as they are) shoot out freely and gracefully, like the slender trees in a forest; and are not clipped and cut down, as the understandings of men are, into uncouth shapes and distorted fancies, like yew-trees in an old-fashioned garden. Women in short resemble self-taught men, with more pliancy and delicacy of feeling.

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[1] 'Leviathan.'

CCCXVI. Women have as little imagination as they have reason. They are pure egotists. They cannot go out of themselves. There is no instance of a woman having done anything great in poetry or philosophy. They can act tragedy, because this depends very much on the physical expression of the passions—they can sing, for they have flexible throats and nice ears they can write romances about love—and talk for ever about nothing.

CCCXVII. Women are not philosophers or poets, patriots, moralists, or politicians—they are simply women.

CCCXVIII. Women have a quicker sense of the ridiculous than men, because they judge from immediate impressions, and do not wait for the explanation that may be given of them.

CCCXIX. English Women have nothing to say on general subjects: French Women talk equally well on them or any other. This may be obviously accounted for from the circumstance that the two sexes associate much more together in France than they do with us, so that the tone of conversation in the women has become masculine, and that of the men effeminate. The tone of apathy and indifference in France to the weightier interests of reason and humanity is ascribable to the same cause. Women have no speculative faculty or fortitude of mind, and wherever they exercise a continual and paramount sway, all must be soon laughed out of countenance, but the immediately intelligible and agreeable—but the shewy in religion, the lax in morals, and the superficial in philosophy.

CCCXX. The texture of women's minds, as well as of their bodies, is softer than that of men's: but they have not the same strength of nerve, of understanding, or of moral purpose.

CCCXXI. In France knowledge circulates quickly from the mere communicativeness of the national disposition. Whatever is once discovered, be it good or bad, is made no secret of; but is spread quickly through all ranks and classes of society. Thought then runs along the surface of the mind like an electrical fluid; while the English understanding is a *non-conductor* to it, and damps it with its *torpedo* touch.

CCCXXII. The French are fond of reading as well as of talking. You may constantly see girls tending an apple-stall in the coldest day in winter, and reading Voltaire or Racine. Such a thing was never known in London as a barrow-woman reading Shakespear. Yet we talk of our widespread civilisation, and ample provisions for the education of the poor.

CCCXXIII. In comparing notes with the French, we cannot boast even of our superior conceit; for in that too they have the advantage of us.

CCCXXIV. It is curious that the French, with all their vivacity and love of external splendour, should tolerate nothing but their prosing, didactic style of tragedy on the stage; and that with all their flutter and levity they should combine the most laborious patience and minute finishing in works of art. A French student will take several weeks to complete a chalk drawing from a head of Leonardo da Vinci, which a dull, plodding Englishman would strike off in as many hours.

CCCXXV. The Dutch perhaps finished their landscapes so carefully, because there was a want of romantic and striking objects in them, so that they could only be made interesting by the accuracy of the details.

CCCXXVI. An awkward Englishman has an advantage in going abroad. Instead of having his deficiency more remarked, it is less so; for all Englishmen are thought awkward alike. Any slip in politeness or abruptness of address is attributed to an ignorance of foreign manners, and you escape under the cover of the national character. Your behaviour is no more criticised than your accent. They consider the barbarism of either as a compliment to their own superior refinement.

CCCXXVII. The difference between minuteness and subtlety or refinement seems to be this—that the one relates to the parts, and the other to the whole. Thus, the accumulation of a number of distinct particulars in a work, as the threads of a gold-laced buttonhole, or the hairs on the chin in a portrait of Denner's, is minute or high finishing: the giving the gradations of tone in a sky of Claude's from azure to gold, where the distinction at each step is imperceptible, but the whole effect is striking and grand, and can only be seized upon by the eye and taste, is true refinement and delicacy.

CCCXXVIII. The *forte* of the French is a certain facility and grace of execution. The Germans, who are the opposite to them, are full of throes and labour, and do everything by an overstrained and violent effort.

CCCXXIX. The conversation of a pedantic Scotchman is like a canal with a great number of *locks* in it.

CCCXXX. The most learned are often the most narrowminded men.

CCCXXXI. The insolence of the vulgar is in proportion to their ignorance. They treat everything with contempt which they do not understand.

CCCXXXII. Our contempt for others proves nothing but the illiberality and narrowness of our own views. The English laugh at foreigners, because, from their insular situation, they are unacquainted with the manners and customs of the rest of the world.

CCCXXXIII. The true barbarian is he who thinks everything barbarous but his own tastes and prejudices.

CCCXXXIV. The difference between the vanity of a Frenchman and an Englishman seems to be this—the one thinks everything right that is French, the other thinks everything wrong that is not English. The Frenchman is satisfied with his own country; the Englishman is determined to pick a quarrel with every other.

CCCXXXV. The national precedence between the English and Scotch may be settled by this, that the Scotch are always asserting their superiority over the English, while the English never say a word about their superiority over the Scotch. The first have got together a great number of facts and arguments in their own favour; the last never trouble their heads about the matter, but have taken the point for granted as self-evident.

CCCXXXVI. The great characteristic of the Scotch is that of all semi-barbarous people,—namely, a hard defiance of other nations.

CCCXXXVII. Those who are tenacious on the score of their faults shew that they have no virtues to bring as a set-off against them.

CCCXXXVIII. An Englishman in Scotland seems to be travelling in a conquered country, from the suspicion and precautions he has to encounter; and this is really the history of the case.

CCCXXXIX. We learn a great deal from coming into contact and collision with individuals of other nations. The contrast of character and feeling—the different points of view from which they see things—is an admirable test of the truth or reasonableness of our opinions. Among ourselves we take a number of things for granted, which, as soon as we find ourselves among strangers, we are called upon to account for. With those who think and feel differently from our habitual tone, we must have a reason for the faith that is in us, or we shall not come off very triumphantly. By this comparing of notes, by being questioned and cross-examined, we discover how far we have taken up certain notions on good grounds, or barely on trust. We also learn how much of our best knowledge is built on a sort of acquired instinct, and how little we can analyse those things that seem to most of us self-evident. He is no mean philosopher who can give a reason for one half of what he thinks. It by no means follows that our tastes or judgments are wrong, because we may be at fault in an argument. A Scotchman and a Frenchman would differ equally from an Englishman, but would run into contrary extremes. He might not be able to make good his ground against the levity of the one or the pertinacity of the other, and yet he might be right, for they cannot both be so. By visiting different countries and conversing with their inhabitants, we strike a balance between opposite prejudices, and have an average of truth and nature left.

CCCXL. Strength of character as well as strength of understanding is one of the guides that point the way to truth. By seeing the bias and prejudices of others marked in a strong and decided manner, we are led to detect our own—from laughing at their absurdities we begin to suspect the soundness of our own conclusions, which we find to be just the reverse of them. When I was in Scotland some time ago, I learnt most from the person, whose opinions were, not most right (as I conceive) but most Scotch. In this case, as in playing a game at bowls, you have only to allow for a certain bias in order to hit the Jack: or, as in an algebraic equation, you deduct so much for national character and prejudice, which is a known or given quantity, and what remains is the truth.

CCCXLI. We learn little from mere captious controversy, or the collision of opinions, unless where there is this collision of character to account for the difference, and remind one, by implication, where one's own weakness lies. In the latter case, it is a shrewd presumption that inasmuch as others are wrong, so are we: for the widest breach in argument is made by mutual prejudice.

CCCXLII. There are certain moulds of national character in which all our opinions and feelings must be cast, or they are spurious and vitiated. A Frenchman and an Englishman, a Scotchman and an Irishman, seldom reason alike on any two points consecutively. It is vain to think of reconciling these antipathies: they are something in the juices and the blood. It is not possible for a Frenchman to admire Shakspeare, except out of mere affectation: nor is it at all necessary that he should, while he has authors of his own to admire. But then his not admiring Shakspeare is no reason why we should not. The harm is not in the natural variety of tastes and dispositions, but in setting up an artificial standard of uniformity, which makes us dissatisfied with our own opinions, unless we can make them universal, or impose them as a law upon the world at large.

CCCXLIII. I had rather be a lord than a king. A lord is a private gentleman of the first class, amenable only to himself. A king is a servant of the public, dependent on opinion, a subject for history, and liable to be 'baited with the rabble's curse.' Such a situation is no sinecure. Kings indeed were gentlemen, when their subjects were vassals, and the world (instead of a stage on which they have to perform a difficult and stubborn part) was a deer-park through which they ranged at pleasure. But the case is altered of late, and it is better and has more of the sense of personal dignity in it to come into possession of a large old family estate and 'ancestral' groves, than to have a kingdom to govern—or to lose.

CCCXLIV. The affectation of gentility by people without birth or fortune is a very idle species of vanity. For those who are in middle or humble life to aspire to be always seen in the company of the great is like the ambition of a dwarf who should hire himself as an attendant to wait upon a giant. But we find great numbers of this class—whose pride or vanity seems to be sufficiently gratified by the admiration of the finery or superiority of others, without any farther object. There are sycophants who take a pride in being seen in the train of a great man, as there are fops who delight to follow in the train of a beautiful woman (from a mere impulse of admiration and excitement of the imagination) without the smallest personal pretensions of their own.

CCCXLV. There is a double aristocracy of rank and letters, which is hardly to be endured—*monstrum ingens, biforme*. A lord, who is a poet as well, regards the House of Peers with contempt, as a set of dull fellows; and he considers his brother authors as a Grub-street crew. A king is hardly good enough for him to touch: a mere man of genius is no better than a worm. He alone is all-accomplished. Such people should be *sent to Coventry*; and they generally are so, through their insufferable pride and self-sufficiency.

CCCXLVI. The great are fond of patronising men of genius, when they are remarkable for personal insignificance, so that they can dandle them like parroquets or lapdogs, or when they are distinguished by some awkwardness which they can laugh at, or some meanness which they can despise. They do not wish to encourage or shew their respect for wisdom or virtue, but to witness the defects or ridiculous circumstances accompanying these, that they may have an excuse for treating all sterling pretensions with supercilious indifference. They seek at best to be amused, not to be instructed. Truth is the greatest impertinence a man can be guilty of in polite company; and players and buffoons are the *beau ideal* of men of wit and talents.

CCCXLVII. We do not see nature merely from looking at it. We fancy that we see the whole of any object that is before us, because we know no more of it than what we see. The rest escapes us, as a matter of course; and we easily conclude that the idea in our minds and the image in nature are one and the same. But in fact we only see a very small part of nature, and make an imperfect abstraction of the infinite number of particulars, which are always to be found in it as well as we can. Some do this with more or less accuracy than others, according to habit or natural genius. A painter, for instance, who has been working on a face for several days, still finds out something new in it which he did not notice before, and which he endeavours to give in order to make his copy more perfect, which shews how little an ordinary and unpractised eye can be supposed to comprehend the whole at a single glance. A young artist, when he first begins to study from nature, soon makes an end of his sketch, because he sees only a general outline and certain gross distinctions and masses. As he proceeds, a new field opens to him; differences crowd upon differences; and as his perceptions grow more refined, he could employ whole days in working upon a single part, without satisfying himself at last. No painter, after a life devoted to the art and the greatest care and length of time given to a single study of a head or other object, ever succeeded in it to his wish, or did not leave something still to be done. The greatest artists that have ever appeared are those who have been able to employ some one view or aspect of nature, and no more. Thus Titian was famous for colouring; Raphael for drawing; Correggio for the gradations, Rembrandt for the extremes of light and shade. The combined genius and powers of observation of all the great artists in the world would not be sufficient to convey the whole of what is contained in any one object in nature; and yet the most vulgar spectator thinks he sees the whole of what is before him, at once and without any trouble at all.

CCCXLVIII. A copy is never so good as an original. This would not be the case indeed, if great painters were in the habit of copying bad pictures; but as the contrary practice holds, it follows that the excellent parts of a fine picture must lose in the imitation, and the indifferent parts will not be proportionally improved by anything substituted at a venture for them.

CCCXLIX. The greatest painters are those who have combined the finest general effect with the highest degree of delicacy and correctness of detail. It is a mistake that the introduction of the parts interferes or is incompatible with the effect of the whole. Both are to be found in nature. The most finished works of the most renowned artists are also the best.

CCCL. We are not weaned from a misplaced attachment by (at last) discovering the unworthiness of the object. The character of a woman is one thing; her graces and attractions another; and these last acquire even an additional charm and piquancy from the disappointment we feel in other respects. The truth is, a man in love prefers his passion to every other consideration, and is fonder of his mistress than he is of virtue. Should she prove vicious, she makes vice lovely in his eyes.

CCCLI. An accomplished coquet excites the passions of others, in proportion as she feels none herself. Her forwardness allures, her indifference irritates desire. She fans the flame that does not scorch her own bosom; plays with men's feelings, and studies the effect of her several arts at leisure and unmoved.

CCCLII. Grace in women is the secret charm that draws the soul into its circle, and binds a spell round it for ever. The reason of which is, that habitual grace implies a continual sense of delight, of ease and propriety, which nothing can interrupt, ever varying, and adapting itself to all circumstances alike.

CCCLIII. Even among the most abandoned of the sex, there is generally found to exist one strong and individual attachment, which remains unshaken through all circumstances. Virtue steals like a guilty thing into the secret haunts of vice and infamy, clings to their devoted victim, and will not be driven quite away. Nothing can destroy the human heart.

CCCLIV. There is a heroism in crime as well as in virtue. Vice and infamy have their altars and their religion. This makes nothing in their favour, but is a proud compliment to man's nature.

Whatever he is or does, he cannot entirely efface the stamp of the Divinity on him. Let him strive ever so, he cannot divest himself of his natural sublimity of thought and affection, however he may pervert or deprave it to ill.

CCCLV. We judge of character too much from names and classes and modes of life. It alters very little with circumstances. The theological doctrines of *Original Sin*, of *Grace*, and *Election*, admit of a moral and natural solution. Outward acts or events hardly reach the inward disposition or fitness for good or evil. Humanity is to be met with in a den of robbers, nay, modesty in a brothel. Nature prevails, and vindicates its rights to the last.

CCCLVI. Women do not become abandoned with the mere loss of character. They only discover the vicious propensities which they before were bound to conceal. They do not (all at once) part with their virtue, but throw aside the veil of affectation and prudery.

CCCLVII. It is enough to satisfy ambition to excel in some one thing. In everything else, one would wish to be a common man. Those who aim at every kind of distinction turn out mere pretenders and coxcombs. One of the ancients has said that 'the wisest and most accomplished man is like the statues of the Gods placed against a wall—in front an Apollo or a Mercury, behind a plain piece of marble.'

CCCLVIII. The want of money, according to the poet, has the effect of making men ridiculous. It not only has this disadvantage with respect to ourselves, but it often shews us others in a very contemptible point of view. If we sink in the opinion of the world from adverse circumstances, the world is apt to sink equally in ours. Poverty is the test of civility and the touchstone of friendship.

CCCLIX. There are those who borrow money, in order to lend it again. This is raising a character for generosity at an easy rate.

CCCLX. The secret of the difficulties of those people who make a great deal of money, and yet are always in want of it, is this—they throw it away as soon as they get it on the first whim or extravagance that strikes them, and have nothing left to meet ordinary expenses or discharge old debts.

CCCLXI. Those who have the habit of *being generous before they are just*, fancy they are getting out of difficulties all their lives, because it is in their power to do so whenever they will; and for this reason they go on in the same way to the last, because the time never comes for baulking their inclinations or breaking off a bad habit.

CCCLXII. It is a mistake that we court the society of the rich and the great merely with a view to what we can obtain from them. We do so, because there is something in external rank and splendour that gratifies and imposes on the imagination, just as we prefer the company of those who are in good health and spirits to that of the sickly and hypochondriacal, or as we would rather converse with a beautiful woman than with an ugly one.

CCCLXIII. Shakspeare says, 'Men's judgments are a parcel of their fortunes.' A person in depressed circumstances is not only not listened to—he has not the spirit to say a good thing.

CCCLXIV. We *are* very much what others *think of us*. The reception our observations meet with, gives us courage to proceed or damps our efforts. A man is a wit and a philosopher in one place, who dares not open his mouth and is considered as a blockhead in another. In some companies nothing will go down but coarse practical jests, while the finest remark or sarcasm would be disregarded.

CCCLXV. Men of talent rise with their company, and are brought out by the occasion. Coxcombs and pedants have no advantage but over the dull and ignorant, with whom they talk on by rote.

CCCLXVI. In France or abroad one feels one's self at a loss; but then one has an excuse ready in an ignorance of the language. In Scotland they speak the same language, but do not understand a word that you say. One cannot get on in society, without ideas in common. To attempt to convert strangers to your notions, or to alter their whole way of thinking in a short stay among them, is indeed making a toil of a pleasure, and enemies of those who may be inclined to be friends.

CCCLXVII. In some situations, if you say nothing you are called dull; if you talk, you are thought impertinent or arrogant. It is hard to know what to do in this case. The question seems to be whether your vanity or your prudence predominates.

CCCLXVIII. One has sometimes no other way of escaping from a sense of insignificance, but by offending the self-love of others. We should recollect, however, that good manners are indispensable at all times and places, whereas no one is bound to make a figure, at the expense of propriety.

CCCLXIX. People sometimes complain that you do not talk, when they have not given you an opportunity to utter a word for a whole evening. The real ground of disappointment has been, that you have not shewn a sufficient degree of attention to what they have said.

CCCLXX. I can listen with patience to the dullest or emptiest companion in the world, if he does not require me to do anything more than listen.

CCCLXXI. Wit is the rarest quality to be met with among people of education, and the most common among the uneducated.

CCCLXXII. Are we to infer from this, that wit is a vulgar faculty, or that people of education are proportionably deficient in liveliness and spirit?

CCCLXXIII. We seldom hear and seldomer make a witty remark. Yet we read nothing else in Congreve's plays.

CCCLXXIV. Those who object to wit are envious of it.

CCCLXXV. The persons who make the greatest outcry against bad puns, are the very same who also find fault with good ones. A bad pun at least generally leads to a wise remark—*that it is a bad one.*

CCCLXXVI. A grave blockhead should always go about with a lively one—they shew one another off to the best advantage.

CCCLXXVII. A lively blockhead in company is a public benefit. Silence or dullness by the side of folly looks like wisdom.

CCCLXXVIII. It is not easy to write essays like Montaigne, nor Maxims in the manner of the Duke de la Rochefoucault.

CCCLXXIX. The most perfect style of writing may be that which treats strictly and methodically of a given subject; the most amusing (if not the most instructive) is that, which mixes up the personal character of the author with general reflections.

CCCLXXX. The seat of knowledge is in the head; of wisdom, in the heart. We are sure to judge wrong, if we do not feel right.

CCCLXXXI. He who exercises a constant independence of spirit, and yet seldom gives offence by the freedom of his opinions, may be presumed to have a well-regulated mind.

CCCLXXXII. There are those who never offend by never speaking their minds; as there are others who blurt out a thousand exceptionable things without intending it, and because they are actuated by no feelings of personal enmity towards any one.

CCCLXXXIII. Cowardice is not synonymous with prudence. It often happens that the better part of discretion is valour.

CCCLXXXIV. Mental cowards are afraid of expressing a strong opinion, or of striking hard, lest the blow should be retaliated. They throw themselves on the forbearance of their antagonists, and hope for impunity in their insignificance.

CCCLXXXV. No one ever gained a good word from friend or foe, from man or woman, by want of spirit. The public know how to distinguish between a contempt for themselves and the fear of an adversary.

CCCLXXXVI. Never be afraid of attacking a bully.

CCCLXXXVII. An honest man speaks truth, *though* it may give offence; a vain man, *in order that* it may.

CCCLXXXVIII. Those only deserve a monument who do not need one; that is, who have raised themselves a monument in the minds and memories of men.

CCCLXXXIX. Fame is the inheritance not of the dead, but of the living. It is we who look back with lofty pride to the great names of antiquity, who drink of that flood of glory as of a river, and refresh our wings in it for future flight.

CCCXC. The inhabitant of a metropolis is apt to think this circumstance alone gives him a decided superiority over every one else, and does not improve that natural advantage so much as he ought.

CCCXCI. A true-bred *cockney* fancies his having been born in London is a receipt in full for every other species of merit. He belongs, in his own opinion, to a *privileged class*.

CCCXCII. The number of objects we see from living in a large city amuses the mind like a perpetual raree-show, without supplying it with any ideas. The understanding thus becomes habitually mechanical and superficial.

CCCXCIII. In proportion to the number of persons we see, we forget that we know less of mankind.

CCCXCIV. Pertness and conceit are the characteristics of a true *cockney*. He feels little respect for the greatest things, from the opportunity of seeing them often and without trouble; and at the same time he entertains a high opinion of himself from his familiarity with them. He who has seen all the great actors, the great public characters, the chief public buildings, and the other wonders of the metropolis, thinks less of them from this circumstance; but conceives a prodigious contempt for all those who have not seen what he has.

CCCXCV. The confined air of a metropolis is hurtful to the minds and bodies of those who have never lived out of it. It is impure, stagnant—without breathing-space to allow a larger view of ourselves or others—and gives birth to a puny, sickly, unwholesome, and degenerate race of beings.

CCCXCVI. Those who, from a constant change and dissipation of outward objects have not a moment's leisure left for their own thoughts, can feel no respect for themselves, and learn little consideration for humanity.

CCCXCVII. Profound hypocrisy is inconsistent with vanity: for the last would betray our designs by some premature triumph. Indeed, vanity implies a sympathy with others, and consummate hypocrisy is built on a total want of it.

CCCXCVIII. A hypocrite despises those whom he deceives, but has no respect for himself. He would make a dupe of himself too, if he could.

CCCXCIX. There is a degree of selfishness so complete, that it does not feel the natural emotions of resentment, contempt, &c. against those who have done all they could to provoke them. Everything but itself is a matter of perfect indifference to it. It feels towards others no more than if they were of a different species; and inflicts torture or imparts delight, itself unmoved and immovable.

CCCC. Egotism is an infirmity that perpetually grows upon a man, till at last he cannot bear to think of anything but himself, or even to suppose that others do.

CCCCI. He will never have true friends who is afraid of making enemies.

CCCCII. The way to procure insults is to submit to them. A man meets with no more respect than he exacts.

CCCCIII. What puts the baseness of mankind in the strongest point of view is, that they avoid those who are in misfortune, instead of countenancing or assisting them. They anticipate the increased demand on their sympathy or bounty, and escape from it as from a falling house.

CCCCIV. Death puts an end to rivalship and competition. The dead can boast no advantage over us; nor can we triumph over them.

CCCCV. We judge of an author by the quality, not the quantity, of his productions. Unless we add as much to our reputation by a second attempt as we did by our first, we disappoint expectation, and lose ground with the public. Those therefore who have done the least have often the greatest reputation. The author of Waverley has not risen in public estimation by the extreme voluminousness of his writings: for it seems as if that which is done so continually could not be very difficult to do, and that there is some trick or *knack* in it. The miracle ceases with the repetition! The *Pleasures of Hope* and the *Pleasures of Memory*, on the contrary, stand alone and increase in value, because they seem unrivalled and inimitable, even by the authors themselves. An economy of expenditure is the way to grow rich in fame, as well as in other pursuits.

CCCCVI. It is better to drink of deep griefs than to taste shallow pleasures.

CCCCVII. Those who can command themselves, command others.

CCCCVIII. A surfeit of admiration or friendship often ends in an indifference worse than hatred or contempt. It is not a lively perception of faults, but a sickly distaste to the very idea of the persons formerly esteemed, a palling of the imagination, or a conscious inertness and inability to revive certain feelings—a state from which the mind shrinks with greater repugnance than from any other.

CCCCIX. The last pleasure in life is the sense of discharging our duty.

CCCCX. Those people who are fond of giving trouble like to take it; just as those who pay no attention to the comforts of others, are generally indifferent to their own. We are governed by sympathy; and the extent of our sympathy is determined by that of our sensibility.

CCCCXI. No one is idle, who can do anything.

CCCCXII. Friendship is cemented by interest, vanity, or the want of amusement: it seldom implies esteem, or even mutual regard.

CCCCXIII. Some persons make promises for the pleasure of breaking them.

CCCCXIV. Praise is no match for blame and obloquy. For, were the scales even, the malice of mankind would throw in the casting-weight.

CCCCXV. The safest kind of praise is to foretell that another will become great in some particular way. It has the greatest shew of magnanimity, and the least of it in reality. We are not jealous of dormant merit, which nobody recognises but ourselves, and which in proportion as it developes itself, demonstrates our sagacity. If our prediction fails, it is forgotten; and if it proves true, we may then set up for prophets.

CCCCXVI. Men of genius do not excel in any profession because they labour in it, but they labour in it, because they excel.

CCCCXVII. Vice is man's nature: virtue is a habit—or a mask.

CCCCXVIII. The foregoing maxim shews the difference between truth and sarcasm.

CCCCXIX. Exalted station precludes even the exercise of natural affection, much more of common humanity.

CCCCXX. We for the most part strive to regulate our actions, not so much by conscience or reason, as by the opinion of the world. But *by the world* we mean those who entertain an opinion about us. Now, this circle varies exceedingly, but never expresses more than a part. In senates, in camps, in town, in country, in courts, in a prison, a man's vices and virtues are weighed in a separate scale by those who know him, and who have similar feelings and pursuits. We care about no other opinion. There is a moral horizon which bounds our view, and beyond which the rest is air. The public is divided into a number of distinct jurisdictions for different claims; and posterity is but a name, even to those who sometimes dream of it.

CCCCXXI. We can bear to be deprived of everything but our self-conceit.

CCCCXXII. Those who are fond of setting things to rights, have no great objection to seeing them wrong. There is often a good deal of spleen at the bottom of benevolence.

CCCCXXIII. The reputation of science which ought to be the most lasting, as synonymous with truth, is often the least so. One discovery supersedes another; and the progress of light throws the past into obscurity. What has become of the Blacks, the Lavoisiers, the Priestleys, in chemistry? In political economy, Adam Smith is laid on the shelf, and Davenant and De Witt have given place to the Says, the Ricardos, the Malthuses, and the Macullochs. These persons are happy in one respect—they have a sovereign contempt for all who have gone before them, and never dream of those who are to come after them and usurp their place. When any set of men think theirs the only science worth studying, and themselves the only infallible persons in it, it is a sign how frail the traces are of past excellence in it, and how little connection it has with the general affairs of human life. In proportion to the profundity of any inquiry, is its futility. The most important and lasting truths are the most obvious ones. Nature cheats us with her mysteries, one after another, like a juggler with his tricks; but shews us her plain honest face, without our paying for it. The understanding only blunders more or less in trying to find out what things are in themselves: the heart judges at once of its own feelings and impressions; and these are true and the same.

CCCCXXIV. Scholastic divinity was of use in its day, by affording exercise to the mind of man. Astrology, and the finding-out the philosopher's stone, answered the same purpose. If we had not something to doubt, to dispute and quarrel about, we should be at a loss what to do with our time.

CCCCXXV. The multitude who require to be led, still hate their leaders.

CCCCXXVI. It has been said that any man may have any woman.

CCCCXXVII. Many people are infatuated with ill-success, and reduced to despair by a lucky turn in their favour. While all goes well, they are *like fish out of water*. They have no confidence or sympathy with their good fortune, and look upon it as a momentary delusion. Let a doubt be thrown on the question, and they begin to be full of lively apprehensions again; let all their hopes vanish, and they feel themselves on firm ground once more. From want of spirit or of habit, their imaginations cannot rise from the low ground of humility, cannot reflect the gay, flaunting colours of the rainbow, flag and droop into despondency, and can neither indulge the expectation, nor employ the means of success. Even when it is within their reach, they dare not lay hands upon it, and shrink from unlooked-for prosperity, as something of which they are ashamed and unworthy. The class of *croakers* here spoken of are less delighted at other people's misfortunes than at their own. Querulous complaints and anticipations of failure are the food on which they live, and they at last acquire a passion for that which is the favourite subject of their thoughts and conversation.

CCCCXXVIII. There are some persons who never succeed, from being too indolent to undertake anything; and others who regularly fail, because the instant they find success in their power, they grow indifferent, and give over the attempt.

CCCCXXIX. To be remembered after we are dead, is but a poor recompense for being treated with contempt while we are living.

CCCCXXX. Mankind are so ready to bestow their admiration on the dead, because the latter do not hear it, or because it gives no pleasure to the objects of it. Even fame is the offspring of envy.

CCCCXXXI. Truth is not one, but many; and an observation may be true in itself that contradicts another equally true, according to the point of view from which we contemplate the subject.

CCCCXXXII. Much intellect is not an advantage in courtship. General topics interfere with particular attentions. A man, to be successful in love, should think only of himself and his mistress. Rochefoucault observes that lovers are never tired of each other's company, because they are always talking of themselves.

CCCCXXXIII. The best kind of oratory or argument is not that which is most likely to succeed with any particular person. In the latter case, we must avail ourselves of our knowledge of individual circumstances and character: in the former, we must be guided by general rules and calculations.

CCCCXXXIV. The picture of the Misers, by Quintin Matsys, seems to proceed upon a wrong idea. It represents two persons of this description engaged and delighted with the mutual contemplation of their wealth. But avarice is not a social passion; and the true miser should retire into his cell to gloat over his treasures alone, without sympathy or observation.

The End.

NOTES

NOTES

MEMOIRS OF THOMAS HOLCROFT

The chief source of information respecting the life of Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809) is the *Life* here printed. A brief résumé of dates may not, however, be useless. He was born in London, December 10, 1745 (o.s.). After wandering with his father, who was in turn shoemaker, horse-dealer and pedlar, he was apprenticed at the age of thirteen as a stableboy at Newmarket. He returned to London when he was sixteen, and his next years were spent as shoemaker, schoolmaster and strolling player. He turned dramatist, and his first piece, *The Crisis, or Love and Famine*, was acted on May 1, 1778, for a single performance. He turned author, and in 1780 his first novel, *Alwyn, or the Gentleman Comedian*, was published. These were followed by other novels and many plays, the best known of which is *The Road to Ruin* (Covent Garden, February 18, 1792). In 1783 he went abroad in the interests of journalism, and busied himself with sundry translations (*e.g. Le Mariage de Figaro*, by Beaumarchais, which was successful at Covent Garden, December 14, 1784, as *The Follies of a Day*). He did not escape the political troubles of his time, and, on October 7, 1794, he was sent to Newgate to await his trial for high-treason : he was discharged, however, without being tried, on December 1. The remaining years of his life were spent in unfortunate business speculations (chiefly picture-buying) and literary adventures in England and abroad : they were years of constant struggle against poverty and adverse fate. He died on March 23, 1809, and lies buried in Marylebone Parish Cemetery. He married four times.

There does not seem much reason for the abbreviation of the names of people mentioned in Holcroft's 'Memoirs,' since they are rarely the subject of scandal. (See, however, with respect to the Diary, a letter from Wm. Godwin to Mrs. Holcroft, given in C. Kegan Paul's 'William Godwin,' vol. ii. pp. 176-77, and Hazlitt's remarks on p. 169 of the 'Memoirs.') Capitals were evidently used for the sake of shortness ; in some cases it is easy to identify from the context the persons indicated ; in others, less so, and, where possible, the identification is made in the Notes. In some few cases it has not been possible to state definitely the person meant.

In addition to the works mentioned in the text Holcroft seems also to have translated Count Stolberg's 'Travels through Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Sicily' (1796), 'The Life of Baron Trenck' (1792), Goethe's 'Hermann and Dorothea' (1801), 'Sacred Dramas' by the Countess de Genlis (1786).

In a letter from Mary Lamb to Mrs. Hazlitt (Nov. 30, 1810, 'Memoirs of Hazlitt,' vol. i. p. 179), in speaking of Hazlitt's 'Memoirs of Holcroft,' she calls the book the 'Life Everlasting.'

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1. *Orange Court, Leicester Fields*, known later as Orange Street, Leicester Square.
2. *History of Parismus and Parismenos.* A romance of Bohemia (1598) by Emanuel Ford (fl. 1607).

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2. *Seven Champions of Christendom.* By Richard Johnson (1573-1659?) Published 1596-97.

4. *Chapman's Books, i.e.* books sold by chapmen or pedlars.

6. Note. *Hugh Trevor.* 'The Adventures of Hugh Trevor,' London, 1794-97, 6 vols. See p. 136.

10. *the feast of reason.* Pope, Hor. Bk. II. Sat. I.

18. *the great vulgar and the small.* Cowley, Hor. Od. III. I.

19. *spell and null.* A game of ball. The ball (=nur) is released by a spring from a cup at the end of a piece of steel (=spell). The object is to strike it, when released, as far as possible.

bandy. A game similar to hockey.

prison-bars. A game of speed in running from goals or bases.

22. *Childers.* 1715. He was one of the fleetest horses ever known, and was never beaten.

Careless. 1751. Was bred by John Borlace Warren of Stapleford, Notts. He seems to have been beaten in 1758 by Atlas at Huntingdon. In 1760 he beat the Duke of Devonshire's Atlas at York, but previously, in 1759, he had suffered another defeat from Atlas at Newmarket.

24. *Mr. Woodcock.* Holcroft's father could hardly have applied to a better person. John Woodcock was chosen by Mr. Jenison Shafto in 1761 to ride a match for him on the following conditions: to ride a hundred miles a day on any one horse each day for twenty-nine successive days on any number of horses not exceeding twenty-nine. He began on Newmarket Heath, May 4, 1761, at one o'clock in the morning, and won the sum staked, two thousand guineas, for his master on the 1st of June, at six o'clock in the evening, having ridden on only fourteen horses. One day he rode a hundred and sixty miles owing to his first horse having tired when sixty miles only had been accomplished. See Whyte's 'History of the British Turf,' vol. i. p. 513.

25. *Tim Bobbin's Lancashire dialect.* By John Collier (1708-1786). A popular humorous work in dialogue and dialect (1746).

35. *chuck-farthing.* A game in which coins are thrown into a prepared hole.

bones, sinews, and thews. 'Heart, sinews, and bones.'—'Troilus and Cressida,' v. 8.

42. *Death and the Lady.* See Bell's 'Early Ballads and Ballads of the Peasantry' (1877), p. 252.

Margaret's Ghost. 'William and Margaret' (1724), by David Mallet (? 1705-1765). See also Bell's 'Early Ballads,' 1877, p. 120.

King Charles's golden rules. Twelve pithy 'Table Observations,' probably of seventeenth century origin. See 'Notes and Queries,' March 7 and 14, 1863, Jan. 13, 1872. Cf. Goldsmith's 'The Deserted Village,' l. 232.

43. *the Whole Duty of Man.* 1659. Authorship unknown.

Horneck's Crucified Jesus. 1686. Anthony Horneck (1641-1697).

The Life of Francis Spira. Possibly 'A Relation of the fearful estate of Francis Spira after he turned apostate from the Protestant Religion to Popery.' By N. Bacon, 1637 and many later editions.

56. *Mr. Granville Sharpe.* G. Sharp, the abolitionist (1735-1813).

one Macklin. Charles Macklin (? 1697-1797). 'Man of the World' (1781). For particulars of further well-known actors referred to in the 'Memoirs of Thomas Holcroft,' see Notes to Hazlitt's 'A View of the English Stage,' present edition.

59. *Mr. Foote.* Samuel Foote (1720-1777).

Pierre and Jaffier. In 'Venice Preserved' (1681-82), by Thomas Otway (1652-1685).

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59. *Lothario.* In 'The Fair Penitent' (1703), by Nicholas Rowe (1674-1718).
as Nic. Bottom says. 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' I. 2.

63. *Mossop.* Henry Mossop (? 1729-? 1774) had opened Smock Alley Theatre in 1760.

66. *Downing or Dunning.* ? George Downing (d. 1780), who wrote the comedy, 'Newmarket, or The Humours of the Turf' (1763).

67. *lamb's wool.* A drink made of ale, nutmeg, sugar and roasted apples.

70. *Clementi.* Muzio Clementi (1752-1832), the father of pianoforte music.
Note. *the Spoiled Child.* 1790. Ascribed to Isaac Bickerstaffe (d. 1812 ?).
Note. *The Road to Ruin.* See p. 121, and note thereto.

71. *Duke's Place.* Aldgate. A Jewish quarter since 1650.

72. *the part of Bardolph*, and the two following quotations. '1 King Henry IV.' II. 4, and III. 1.

75. *Dr. Last in his Chariot.* 1769. By Bickerstaffe.

76. *Weston.* Thomas Weston (1737-1776).
Note. *the Theatrical Recorder.* A monthly publication, conducted by Holcroft for 2 vols. (1805-6).
Note. *Jerry Sneak.* In Foote's 'The Mayor of Garratt' (1763).
Abel Drugger. In Ben Jonson's 'The Alchemist' (1610).
Scrub. In 'The Beaux' Stratagem' (1707), by George Farquhar (1678-1707).
Sharp. In David Garrick's 'The Lying Valet' (1741).

77. Note. *Bartholomew Fair.* A famous ground for shows and theatrical exhibitions. The fair was held at West Smithfield from 1133 to 1855, and centred round the festival of St. Bartholomew, Aug. 24.
Shuter. Edward Shuter (? 1728-1776).
Mrs. Clive. Catherine Clive (1711-1785).
Kitty Pry. In Garrick's 'The Lying Valet.'
The reason has often been asked. Cf. a similar passage in 'The Round Table,' *On Actors and Acting.*

78. *Patie and Peggy.* In 'The Gentle Shepherd' (1725), by Allan Ramsay (1686-1758).
Mrs. Inchbald. Elizabeth Inchbald (1753-1821), novelist, dramatist and actress.
the polygraphic art. See p. 103.

79. *Bates's company.* Joah Bates (1741-1799).
Mr. Shield. William Shield, musical composer (1748-1829). He wrote the music for 'The Flitch of Bacon,' the success of which obtained for him the post of composer to Covent Garden Theatre; and he composed many popular songs.
Lowth's Grammar. 'A Short Introduction to English Grammar' (1762), by Robert Lowth (1710-1787).
the character of Atticus. Pope's 'Epis. to Arbuthnot.'
Dance. ? William Dance (1755-1840), one of the founders of the Philharmonic Society.
Miss Harrop. Sarah Harrop (d. 1811). She married Joah Bates.
the commemoration of Handel. 1784.
Bundle, in the Waterman. 1774. By Charles Dibdin (1745-1814).
Ritson . . . the Treatise on Animal Food. Joseph Ritson (1752-1803), the antiquarian. 'An Essay on Abstinence from Animal Food as a Moral Duty' (1802).

80. *the poet Cunningham.* John Cunningham (1729-1773), Irish poet and strolling actor.
Miss in her Teens. 1747.

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81. *Bensley.* Robert Bensley (? 1738-? 1817).

82. *there are in this very profession.* Cf. a similar passage in 'The Round Table,' *On Actors and Acting.*

83. *I have oft be-dimm'd.* I have bedimm'd, etc.—'The Tempest,' Act v. 1.

The Crisis. May 1, 1778. Genest ('Some Account of the English Stage,' vol. vi. p. 12) says it was acted for the benefit of the Misses Hopkins. See p. 84.

Kind Impostor. 'She Would and She Would Not, or the Kind Impostor' (1702), by Colley Cibber (1671-1757).

Love in a Village. 1762. By Bickerstaffe.

Maid of the Mill. 1765. By Bickerstaffe.

School for Wives. 1773. By Hugh Kelly (1739-1777).

Faithless Lover. The Fashionable Lover (1772). By Richard Cumberland (1732-1811).

Brothers. 1769. By Cumberland.

West Indian. 1771. By Cumberland.

Lionel and Clarissa. 1768. By Bickerstaffe.

84. *Mr. Greville.* Richard Fulke Greville, author of 'Maxims, Characters, and Reflections' (1756), and grandfather of the diarists, Charles and Henry Greville. See 'The Early Diary of Frances Burney' (ed. Annie Raine Ellis, 2 vols., 1889), and Boswell's *Life* (ed. G. B. Hill, iv. 304). Mrs. Greville (Frances Macartney) was Fanny Burney's godmother. She and her daughter (Mrs., afterwards Lady, Crewe) were 'the two greatest beauties in England.' 'Early Diary,' etc., i. p. 23.

the part of Mungo. In 'The Padlock' (1768), by Bickerstaffe.

Love for Love. 1695. By Congreve.

Mawworm. In 'The Hypocrite' (1768), a comedy by Bickerstaffe, based (through Cibber's 'Nonjuror') on Molière's 'Tartuffe.'

85. *Who's the Dupe?* 1779. By Mrs. Hannah Cowley (1743-1809).

The Flitch of Bacon. 1778. Composed by Henry Bate, afterwards the Rev. Sir Henry Bate Dudley (1745-1824), with music by Shield. For Bate, see Boswell (ed. G. B. Hill), iv. 296.

the Camp. 1778. By Richard Tickell (1751-1793).

86. *the Shepherdess of the Alps.* Covent Garden, Jan. 18, 1780.

Mr. Arne. Michael Arne (1741?-1786).

87. *Mr. King.* Thomas King (1730-1805), actor and dramatist, was three-fourths owner of Sadlers Wells Theatre, 1771-78.

The Noble Peasant. Aug. 2, 1784.

Elegy on his Death. 'On the death of S. Foote, Esq.,' and 'On Age' (1777).

Bath Easton Vase. 'Lady Miller's collection of verses by fashionable people, which were put into her Vase at Batheaston Villa, near Bath, in competition for honorary prizes, being mentioned, he held them very cheap: "*Bouts-rimés* (said he) is a mere conceit, and an *old* conceit *now*; I wonder how people were persuaded to write in that manner for this lady."'—Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (ed. G. B. Hill, ii. 336).

88. *White-Conduit House.* The tea-gardens formerly on the east side of Penton Street, Pentonville, a resort of Goldsmith's.

Nan Catley. Ann Catley (1745-1789).

89. *Duplicity.* Holcroft's first comedy, Covent Garden, Oct. 13, 1781. See p. 100.

P——. James Perry (1756-1821) political writer and joint editor and proprietor (with James Gray) of 'The Morning Chronicle,' 'the only constitutional paper,' referred to on p. 94.

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91. *Nicholson.* William Nicholson (1753-1815), writer on chemistry.

95. *Mrs. Whitelocke.* Mrs. Whitlock (1761-1836) was a sister of Mrs. Siddons. Her husband was part proprietor of the Newcastle Theatre and of others in the North. She was an excellent tragédienne, though her fame has been eclipsed by that of her sister.

his friend N——. Nicholson.

98. *a pamphlet.* A Plain . . . Narrative of the late Riots in London . . . Westminster, and . . . Southwark . . . with an Account of the Commitment of Lord G. Gordon to the Tower, etc. . . . By William Vincent of Gray's Inn (1780).

99. *Loughborough.* Alexander Wedderburn, 1st Baron Loughborough (1733-1805), Lord Chancellor (1793-1801).

100. *Mr. Harris.* Thomas Harris (d. 1820) was associated with Colman and others in the proprietorship and management of Covent Garden Theatre.

102. *King Arthur.* Probably Dryden's (1691).

Mr. Linley. Thomas Linley (1732-1795) was associated with Sheridan in Drury Lane Theatre. He superintended the music. Sheridan married his daughter Elizabeth Ann.

Mr. Wewitzer. Ralph Wewitzer (1748-1825).

103. *Mr. Colman.* George Colman (1732-1794) took over the Haymarket from Foote in 1776.

104. *the Sceptic.* 'Human Happiness, or the Sceptic,' a poem in six cantos (1783).

the Family Picture, or Domestic Dialogues on Amiable Subjects (1783), 2 vols.

Prematur nonum in annum.

'nonumque prematur in annum.'
Hor. De Arte Poet., 388.

Note. *Tales of the Castle*, or Stories of Instruction and Delight, being Les Veillées du Chateau, written in French by Madame la Comtesse de Genlis (1784). Translated into English (1785). 5 vols. An eighth edition was published in 1806.

105. *Duchess of Devonshire.* The celebrated Georgiana (1757-1806), who married in 1774 the 5th Duke of Devonshire.

106. *Mr. John Rivington.* See Hazlitt's note on p. 108. The publisher's (1720-1792) name was also John.

107. *Caroline of Litchfield.* Translated from the French of J. I. P. de Bottens, Baroness de Montolieu.

The Amours of Peter the Long. 'An Amourous Tale of the Chaste Loves of Peter the Long and the History of the Lover's Well. Imitated from the original French' (L. E. Billardson de Sauvigny, 1786).

Memoirs of De Tott. 'Memoirs of the Baron de Tott on the Turks and Tartars. Translated from the French by an English Gentleman at Paris, under the immediate inspection of the Baron' (1785). 2 vols.

Savary's Travels in Egypt. Nicholas Savary's Letters on Egypt, translated from the French (1786). 2 vols.

An Account of the Manners and Treatment of Animals, by D'Obsonville. Philosophic Essays on the manners of various foreign animals. By Foucher D'Obsonville (1784).

the Robinsons. George Robinson (1737-1801). His son and his brother joined and succeeded him in his business as a bookseller.

Mercier. Louis Sébastien Mercier (1740-1814), author of many dramas. His 'The Year 2500' (2440 in French) was published in 1772. He was a supporter of the Revolution.

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107. *Mr. Bonneville.* Nicholas de Bonneville, a poet of the Revolution (1760-1828) and a student of German literature. 'Nouveau Théâtre Allemand' (12 vols.), 1782-5.

109. *The Connoisseurs.* Possibly a confusion for some other play of Colman's. 'The Connoisseur' was a journal of the 'Spectator' type, conducted by G. Colman and Bonnell Thornton, Jan. 31, 1754, to Sept. 30, 1756.

Battle of Hexham. 1789. By George Colman the younger (1762-1836).

The Mountaineers. 1793. By Colman the younger.

The Venetian Outlaw. 1805. By Robert William Elliston (1774-1831), comedian and dramatist.

Note. *The Man of Business.* 1774. By Colman the elder.

111. *Parsons.* Wm. Parsons (1736-1795).

Edwin. John Edwin the elder (1749-1790)

The Choleric Fathers. Nov. 10, 1785.

113. *The Follies of a Day.* Dec. 14, 1784. Published 1785.

Mr. Bonner. Charles Bonnor (fl. 1777-1829?).

114. *M. Berquin.* Arnauld Berquin (1749-1791), a writer for children.

115. *Seduction.* March 12, Drury Lane.

Les Liaisons Dangereux. 'Les Liaisons Dangereuses' (1782), a novel, by P. A. F. Ch. de Laclos (1741-1803).

the King of Prussia's works. Posthumous works of Frederic II., King of Prussia (translated from the French) (1789), 13 vols.

Essays of Lavater. 'Essays on Physiognomy; for the Promotion of the Knowledge and Love of Mankind' (1793), 3 vols.

116. *the German Hotel.* Nov. 11, 1790.

The School for Arrogance. Feb. 4, 1791, Covent Garden. 'As Holcroft imagined that Harris was prejudiced against him, Marshall at first avowed himself as the author of the piece.'—Genest, vol. vii. p. 27. The play was founded on 'Le Glorieux' (1732) of Destouches (1680-1754).

121. *The Road to Ruin.* Covent Garden, Feb. 18, 1792. See 'Lectures on the English Comic Writers,' VIII. Some 'Remarks' signed 'William Hazlitt' are prefixed to French's (late Lacy's) Acting Edition of the play; see 'Memoirs of Hazlitt,' vol. ii. p. 272, for the probable source of these 'Remarks.' They will be found in the Notes to the volume of the present edition containing the bulk of Hazlitt's dramatic criticism.

122. *Lewis.* Wm. Thomas Lewis (1748?-1811).

Castle Rackrent. 1800. By Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849).

129. '*A faultless monster, which the world ne'er saw.*' From the *Essay on Poetry* of John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham (1648-1721).

quod sic mihi ostendis, incredulus odi. Hor. de Arte Poet., 188.

130. *ugly all over with affectation.* Cf. 'He is ugly all over with the affectation of the fine gentleman.' Quoted by Steele from Wycherley, *The Tatler*, No. 38.

'A reasoning, self-sufficient [self-sufficing] thing.'—Wordsworth. 'A Poet's Epitaph.' Poems: Sentiment, etc., viii.

in so questionable a shape. 'In such a questionable shape.'—Hamlet, I. 4.

133. *Mr. Locke's Essay.* The Essay was published in 1690.

136. *the very head and front of his offending.* Othello, I. 3.

139. *Mr. Holcroft's own 'Narrative of Facts.'* 'A Narrative of Facts relating to a Prosecution for High Treason, including the Address to the Jury which the Court refused to hear; with Letters to the Attorney-General . . . and Vicary Gibbs, Esq., and the Defence the Author had prepared if he had been brought to trial' (1795).

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141. *the proclamation.* 'For preventing seditious meetings and writings.'

142. *Mr. Reeves's Association.* John Reeves (1752-1829), founder of the Association for Preserving liberty and property against Levellers and Republicans. He himself was prosecuted by order of the House of Commons for a supposed libellous passage in 'Thoughts on the English Government' (1795), but acquitted.

142. *The late John Hunter.* Anatomist and surgeon (1728-1793).

145. *Hickes's Hall.* Hicks Hall, formerly in St. John Street, Clerkenwell. It was built in 1612 by Sir Baptist Hicks as a sessions house, and abandoned in 1779. The milestones on the Great North Road were measured from here.

146. *Lord Chief Justice Eyre.* Sir James Eyre (1734-1799), Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas.

Attorney-General. Sir John Scott, Attorney-General, afterwards Lord Eldon, was Counsel for the prosecution.

147. *Erskine.* Thomas Erskine (1750-1823), advocate and Lord Chancellor. He eloquently defended many prosecuted for political offences in 1793-4.

Gibbs. Vicary Gibbs (1751-1820), afterwards Sir Vicary Gibbs, otherwise 'Vinegar Gibbs' from his caustic manner, Attorney-General (1807-1812), and Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas (1814-1818). He was a shrewd and learned lawyer and had been complimented by the Attorney-General on his successful defence of Thomas Hardy and Horne Tooke.

Mr. Munden. Joseph Shepherd Munden (1758-1832), comic actor. He was a favourite actor for the part of Dornton in 'The Road to Ruin.' See Lamb's 'Elia,' ed. Ainger, p. 201, 'On the Acting of Munden.'

149. '*an acquitted felon.*' A phrase of Windham's. William Windham (1750-1810) was a member of Pitt's government, and heartily supported measures for the repression of 'sedition.'

151. *Thomas Hardy* (1752-1832), radical politician. He was brought to trial for high treason, Oct. 28, 1794, and found not guilty on Nov. 5.

the trial of Mr. Tooke. John Horne Tooke (1736-1812) had been acquitted on Nov. 22, 1794.

Mr. Kyd, etc. Stewart Kyd (d. 1811), political and legal writer. Jeremiah Joyce (1763-1816), miscellaneous writer. He was tutor to the sons of Lord Stanhope, at whose house, Chevening, Kent, May 4, 1794, he was arrested for treason. See Note to p. 222.

152. *Sharp.* William Sharp (1749-1824), engraver, republican and enthusiast. See p. 226.

Mr Symmonds. H. D. Symmonds, of 20 Paternoster Row, publisher of Holcroft's 'Narrative of Facts' and 'Letter to Mr. Windham.'

153. *Mr. Thelwall's lectures.* John Thelwall (1764-1834), reformer, disseminated political views by means of lectures on Roman history. Later, he was a popular lecturer on elocution.

154. Note. *The Borough of Gatton.* A 'pocket-borough' between Merstham and Reigate, Surrey.

156. *Letter to Mr. Windham.* 'A Letter to the Right Hon. W. Windham on the intemperance and dangerous tendency of his public conduct' (1795).

158. *Dundas.* Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville (1742-1811), a trusted friend of Pitt's, and a member of his government. He practically ruled Scotland for thirty years. Cf. Cockburn's 'Life of Francis Jeffrey,' pp. 74, *et seq*, and Sir H. Craik's 'A Century of Scottish History,' vol. ii. p. 91.

159. '*Love's Frailties*,' or Precept against Practice. Feb. 5.

'*The Deserted Daughter.*' May 2. Owing to the political prejudice against Holcroft many of his plays appeared under assumed names or anonymously.

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159. ‘*The Man of Ten Thousand.*’ Jan. 23.

‘*The Force of Ridicule.*’ Dec. 6, 1796.

‘*Knave or Not.*’ Jan. 25.

‘*He’s much to blame.*’ Feb. 13, 1798. See p. 190.

Bannister. John Bannister (1760-1836).

Miss Farren. Elizabeth Farren (1759?-1829), actress and, later, Countess of Derby.

162. *the tragedy of Cato.* 1713. By Addison.

Miss Jordan. Dorothea Jordan (1762-1816).

o’erstepping the modesty of nature. Hamlet, III. 2.

the Clavigo of Goethe. 1774.

‘*The Inquisitor.*’ June 23, 1798.

‘*The Old Clothesman.*’ 1799 (music by Thomas Attwood, 1765-1838). Genest (vol. vii. p. 434) speaks of its being acted a second time on April 3.

163. *Mr. Godwin.* Wm. Godwin (1756-1836). Mr. Kegan Paul’s ‘William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries’ (1876) contains many of Holcroft’s letters, and much of interest to readers of the ‘Memoirs.’ It seems to have been at Godwin’s house, Holcroft and Coleridge also present, that Hazlitt first met Lamb. See ‘Memoirs of Hazlitt,’ vol. i. p. 126.

Political Justice. ‘Enquiry concerning Political Justice and its influence on Morals and Happiness’ (1793).

Griffiths. Ralph Griffiths (1720-1803), LL.D., founder, proprietor and publisher of ‘The Monthly Review.’

164. *the Review of Mr. Malthus’s publication.* The ‘Essay on the Principle of Population’ (Thomas Robert Malthus, 1766-1834) was published in 1798.

Colonel Harwood. ? Col. Harwood, nephew of William Tooke, Horne Tooke’s friend.

165. *the Fratres Poloni.* Polonorum Fratrum Bibliotheca quos Unitarios vocant, etc., 1656, 5 vols. folio. See ‘Memoirs of Hazlitt,’ vol. i. p. 33.

the original picture of Sion House, painted by Wilson. ‘A view of Sion House from Richmond Gardens’ (1776), by Richard Wilson (1714-1782), one of the greatest of English landscape painters.

166. *Gresset.* Jean Baptiste Louis Gresset (1709-1777), French poet and dramatist.

167. *prison-bars.* See note to p. 19.

169. *Mr. and Mrs. Opie.* John Opie (1761-1807), historical painter. One of his portraits of Holcroft forms the frontispiece to the present volume. His wife, Amelia, was a writer of ability.

Debrett’s. The shop of John Debrett (d. 1822), opposite Burlington House, Piccadilly, a Whig resort.

R. Ad——. Sir Robert Adair (1763-1855), the friend of Charles James Fox.

Lord Fitz——. William Wentworth, 2nd Earl Fitzwilliam (1748-1833).

D—— P——. William Henry Cavendish Bentinck, 3rd Duke of Portland (1738-1809).

Professor Porson. Richard Porson (1759-1808), Greek scholar and critic.

Middleton’s preface. Conyers Middleton’s (1683-1750) ‘History of the Life of M. Tullius Cicero’ (1741). A book which enjoyed a great reputation, and which reached a fourth edition in 1750.

170. *the letters to Travis.* ‘Letters to Mr. Archdeacon Travis [George, 1741-1797] in answer to his Defence of the three heavenly witnesses’ [1 John v. 7], published by Porson in ‘The Gentleman’s Magazine,’ 1788-89, and in a volume in 1790; described by Gibbon as ‘the most acute and accurate piece of criticism since the days of Bentley.’

the Minor. 1760. By Foote.

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170. *Pennant's tour in Scotland.* Thomas Pennant's (1726-1798) 'Tours in Scotland' were published in 1771-75. 'He's a *Whig*, Sir; a *sad dog* . . . but he's the best traveller I ever read.'—Johnson. See Boswell's Life (ed. G. B. Hill), iii. 274.

Carlisle. Sir Anthony Carlisle (1768-1840), comparative anatomist, who was associated in 1800 with Holcroft's friend Nicholson in his electrical researches.

Mr. Waldron. Francis Godolphin Waldron (1744-1818), writer and actor.

171. *Perry.* See note to p. 89. Perry was sent to Newgate by the House of Lords, 22nd March 1798, for three months, and fined £50, for a 'libel' on that assembly.

Wakefield's pamphlet. Gilbert Wakefield (1756-1801), pamphleteer, scholar, and critic, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, in May 1799, for remarks in a pamphlet addressed to the Bishop of Llandaff. His publisher (Cuthell) and printer were also convicted. Erskine defended Cuthell, whose punishment was remitted. See also p. 202.

And Note. *Mr. Fawcett.* Dissenting minister and poet (? 1758-1804). Mrs. Siddons and the Kembles were often amongst his listeners. 'The Art of War' was published in 1795. See 'Memoirs of Hazlitt,' vol. i. pp. 75-79, for a collection of Hazlitt's notices of Mr. Fawcett. See also sundry references to him in 'The Spirit of the Age.' Godwin says: 'The four principal oral instructors to whom I feel my mind indebted for improvement were Joseph Fawcet, Thomas Holcroft, George Dyson, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge' (Kegan Paul's 'Godwin,' i. p. 17).

172. *Lord Townshend.* George, 4th Viscount and 1st Marquis (1724-1807).

St. John. ? John St. John (1746-1793), dramatist and M.P.

Bower's Life of Pope Alexander the Sixth. Probably Archibald Bower's (1686-1766) 'History of the Popes,' the first volume of which was published in 1748, and the sixth and seventh just before his death.

173. '*First Elements.*' 'Elements of Natural History and Chemistry' (1788) and Chaptal's 'Elements' (1795), both translations or adaptations.

Fenwick's publication. A pamphlet on behalf of the Rev. James O'Coigly. The 'late trial' would be that of Arthur (referred to on the next page) O'Connor (1763-1852) and Coigly at Maidstone for high treason. Coigly was found guilty on May 22, 1798, and executed on June 7. Although O'Connor was found Not Guilty, he was not liberated until 1803. See also Note to p. 186.

174. *Mr Stodart.* Sir John Stoddart (1773-1856), whose only sister, Sarah, married W. Hazlitt.

Mrs. Revely. Maria Reveley (*née* James), a friend of Godwin's. (See Kegan Paul's 'Godwin,' vol. i. p. 81 *et seq.*).

Warren. Richard Warren (1731-1797), the head of the medical practice of his day. Mrs. Inchbald composed memorial verses on his death.

Sir George Baker (1722-1809).

175. *Reynold's.* For Reynold's read Reynolds's.

the following assertion of Johnson. See Life (ed. G. B. Hill), vol. ii. p. 198.

C——. Carlisle. See note to p. 170.

176. *Ireland's Hogarth Illustrated.* John Ireland's (d. 1808) edition, in 3 vols., roy. 8vo, 1791-98.

Boyd and Benfield. Walter Boyd (1754 ?-1837), financier, and Paul Benfield (d. 1810), Indian trader. They were bankers, established in London in 1793 and ruined in 1799. See Lockhart's 'Scott,' chap. lxxvi.

Law. John Law (1681-1729), financial projector and Parisian banker.

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176. *Purcel.* Henry Purcell (1658 ?-1695).

as Boswell affirms. See Life (ed. G. B. Hill), ii. 342. The statement was made by Tom Davies. Dr. Burney says, in a note, that Corelli never was in England.

Corelli. Archangelo Corelli, Italian musician (1653-1713).

177. *Phillips.* Sir Richard Phillips (1767-1840), author, bookseller, and publisher. He established the 'Monthly Magazine' in 1796, which was edited by John Aikin.

F. the Cambridge man. Flower. See Note to p. 190.

Pinkerton (Heron's Letters). John Pinkerton (1758-1826), Scottish historian and antiquarian. His 'Letters of Literature' (Robert Heron, 1785) introduced him to Walpole. See De Quincey's 'Orthographic Mutineers.' Works, ed. Masson, xi. pp. 443-44.

the wife of Petion. Jérôme Pétion de Villeneuve (1756-1794) of the French Revolution. He was proscribed in 1793 and escaped, but he and his companions shot themselves.

George Dyer (1755-1841), miscellaneous writer. See Lamb's 'Amicus Redivivus.' 'Elia,' ed. Ainger, p. 281.

178. *Don Carlos.* Schiller (1787). Stoddart (see note to p. 174) published a translation of 'Don Carlos' with G. H. Noehden in 1798.

Pitt . . . duel. Pitt fought a duel with Tierney, 27th May, 1798, on Putney Heath. Pitt had accused Tierney of wilful obstruction. Neither shot took effect.

Count Rumford's experiments on heat. Sir Benjamin Thompson (1753-1814), created Count von Rumford by the Elector of Bavaria for his services to that State. He founded the Royal Institution.

Dalrymple. Alexander Dalrymple (1737-1808), hydrographer to the Admiralty.

Sir Joseph Banks (1743-1820), naturalist and companion of Captain Cook in a voyage round the world.

C——, G——, O——. Probably Carlisle, Godwin, and Opie.

Laudohn. Gideon Ernest Laudohn (1716-1790). Because of the intrigues of his rivals he was not created Field-Marshal until 1778.

179. *Crebillon.* Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon (1674-1762), dramatic poet.

180. *Garat.* Dominique Joseph Comte Garat (1749-1833) of the French Revolution.

Sir William B——. Sir William Beechey (1753-1839).

his picture of the dying Cardinal. 'The Death of Cardinal Beaufort.' A drawing by Fuseli of the same subject had appeared at the Royal Academy in 1774.

a picture by Fuseli for Comus. Henry Fuseli (1741-1825). The picture would be one of his forty for the 'Milton Gallery,' opened May 20, 1799, in Pall Mall.

181. *Sir F. Bourgeois.* Sir Peter Francis Bourgeois (1756-1811), landscape painter to George III. His collection was bequeathed to Dulwich College.

Mr. P——. Mr. Pinkerton. Is this the 'tragedy' spoken of by Sir Walter Scott? See Lockhart's 'Life,' Letter to Miss Joanna Baillie, March 21, 1813.

Wolcott. John Wolcot, 'Peter Pindar' (1738-1819), physician, satirist, and poet.

Steevens. George Steevens (1736-1800), Shakespearian commentator.

the two Sheares's. John (1766-1798), and Henry (1753-1798), of the 'United Irishmen.' They were executed for high treason. See Lady Wilde's poem, 'The Brothers.'

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182. *a philippic by Francis . . . against Thurlow.* Sir Philip Francis (1740-1818), reputed author of the 'Letters of Junius,' and Edward Thurlow (1731-1806), Lord Chancellor (1778-83 and 1784-92). The speech by Francis was delivered on July 16, 1784 (*Parl. Hist.* xxiv. pp. 1102-22).

182. *Sastres.* To whom Johnson bequeathed five pounds, 'to be laid out in books of piety for his own use' (ed. G. B. Hill, iv. 403). Boswell had perhaps annoyed him by a passage (ed. G. B. Hill, iii. 21), in which, speaking of the widely different persons with whom Johnson associated, he joined Lord Thurlow's name with that of 'Mr. Sastres, the Italian master.'

183. *Johnson complains in one of his letters.* 'The best night I have had these twenty years was at Fort Augustus.' Letter to Boswell (Life, ed. G. B. Hill, iii. 369).

184. *the new edition of Pilkington.* 'The Gentleman's and Connoisseur's Dictionary of Painters' (1770), by Matthew Pilkington (1700?-1784). A new edition, edited by Dr. Wolcot, appeared in 1799.

Malone. Edmund Malone (1741-1812), commentator on Shakespeare and the friend and editor of Boswell.

Read. Isaac Reed (1742-1807), critic and Shakespearian commentator.

Boswell likewise prates. See Life (ed. G. B. Hill, iv. 40-41).

Dr. Towers. Joseph Towers (1737-1799), political writer. See p. 202.

the late Dr. Kippis. Andrew Kippis (1725-1795), dissenting divine.

P——'s tragedy. See note to p. 181.

185. *Loutherbourg.* Philip James Loutherbourg (1740-1812), landscape painter.

Gilleray. James Gillray (1757-1815), caricaturist.

Mr. E——. Erskine.

186. *Lord Thanet.* Sackville Tufton, 9th Earl of Thanet (1767-1825). A Whig sympathiser of Arthur O'Connor's. He was tried April 25, 1799, for attempting to rescue O'Connor at Maidstone. See note to p. 173. He was sentenced to one year's imprisonment, fined £1000, and ordered to find security for 7 years in £20,000.

Judge Buller. Sir Francis Buller (1746-1800). He presided at the trial of Arthur O'Connor.

Garrow. Sir William Garrow (1760-1840), successively Solicitor-General (1812-13) and Attorney-General (1813-17).

Fullarton. ? William Fullarton (1754-1808), Anglo-Indian Commander, and Member of Parliament.

188. *the respite of Bond.* Oliver Bond (1760?-1798), Irish republican, was tried, July 1798, and sentenced to be hanged for high treason. He was respited by the Viceroy, the Marquis Cornwallis, on the entreaty of his fellow-prisoners, who, to spare him, agreed to turn informers. See p. 190.

Farmer's library. Richard Farmer (1735-1797), Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and author of 'An Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare' (1767). The Catalogue ran to nearly 400 pages, concerning over 8000 books. The library had cost £500 to collect, and sold for over £2000. The comment in the 'Annual Register' is 'such is the rage for musty literature.'

Dr. Gosset. Isaac Gosset the younger (1735?-1812), bibliographer. He was a well-known figure at London auction sales.

189. *B——.* Sir William Beechey.

Desenfans. Noel Joseph Desenfans (1745-1807), picture-dealer.

Farrington. Joseph Farington (1747-1821), landscape painter.

Hodges. William Hodges (1744-1797), Royal Academician.

190. *the Cambridge paper.* 'The Cambridge Intelligencer,' edited by Benjamin Flower (1755-1829). He was imprisoned for libel in due course. His

paper was a rare example of a provincial paper, advocating religious liberty and condemning the French war.

191. *Lowe (mentioned by him in his life of Johnson).* Mauritius Lowe (1746-1793), the painter. For Boswell's version of the story referred to in the text, see Life (ed. G. B. Hill, iv. 201-2).

191. *N——.* Nicholson. His 'Journal [see pp. 192, 212] of Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, and the Arts,' etc., appeared in 1797-1802 and 1802-15.

192. *the voyage of Perouse.* John Francis Galoup de la Perouse (b. 1741), French circumnavigator. He perished off the New Hebrides after March 1788. Translations of 'A Voyage round the World 1785-88' were published 1798 (8vo), and 1799 (4to).

194. *Wild Oats*, or the Strolling Gentleman. 1791. By John O'Keeffe. In 1798 his Works were published by Subscription in 4 vols.

Mr. Ramsey. James Ramsey, divine and philanthropist (1733-1789). His 'An Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies' was published in 1784.

195. *Emery and Mrs. Mills.* John Emery (1777-1822). See Hazlitt's note on p. 70. Genest (vol. vii. p. 426) says Mrs. Mills from York made her second appearance on Oct. 10 (Covent Garden). She acted Sophia in 'The Road to Ruin,' and Little Pickle in 'The Spoil'd Child.'

196. *Dr. Parr.* Samuel Parr (1747-1825), 'the Whig Johnson.' His 'Præfatio ad Bellendenum de Statu' was published in 1787.

Mackintosh. ? Sir James Mackintosh (1765-1832). He was associated with the Society for Constitutional Information.

Lovers' Vows. 1798. By Mrs. Inchbald, adapted from Kotzebue.

197. *J. Aickin.* James Aickin or Aikin (d. 1803), actor.

Cumberland sent his Tiberius [in Capreæ].

198. *Dr. A——?* Dr. John Aikin (1747-1822), physician and editor of 'The Monthly Magazine.' He was the father of Mrs. Barbauld.

Palmer. Thomas Palmer. See Genest (vol. vii. p. 427).

Edelinck. Gerard Edelinck (1649-1707), engraver.

199. *Boaden.* James Boaden (1762-1839), the biographer of Mrs. Inchbald.

Bosville. William Bosville (1745-1813), bon vivant and friend of Horne Tooke. See the latter's 'Diversions of Purley.'

Tobin. John Tobin (1770-1804), dramatic writer.

200. *Grenville.* William Wyndham, Baron Grenville (1759-1834).

Cornwallis. Charles, 1st Marquis and 2nd Earl Cornwallis (1738-1805). Governor-General of India, and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

201. *School for Ingratitude.* A comedy by Fisher (1798).

Mr Reynolds. Frederick Reynolds (1764-1841). 'Cheap Living' appeared in 1797, but 'The School for Ingratitude' had been submitted at Drury Lane and rejected before its publication in 1798. See Genest (vol. vii. p. 329).

Tierney. George Tierney (1761-1830), statesman and political writer, Whig and duellist (with Pitt). Probably the T—— referred to on p. 199.

Walpole's Painters. Anecdotes of Painting in England (1762-1771). Issued from Strawberry Hill.

the Narrative, etc. See notes to pp. 139 and 156.

Fittler. James Fittler (1758-1835), engraver.

the Exiles. A translation or adaptation of Kotzebue's (1761-1819) play. See p. 196.

Platonist Taylor. Thomas Taylor (1758-1835), lecturer on, and translator of, Plato.

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202. *Tone.* Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763-1798), Irish revolutionist. He committed suicide in prison while under sentence of death.

Wakefield's pamphlet. See note to p. 171.

Morland. George Morland (1763-1804), painter of country scenes and humble life.

203. *Dr. Franklin.* Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790).

Dr. Solander. Daniel Charles Solander (1736-1782). Swedish naturalist, and companion of Sir Joseph Banks and Captain Cook in a voyage round the world.

Bentley. Thomas Bentley (1731-1780), entered into partnership with Wedgwood, 1768.

Wedgewood. Josiah Wedgwood (1730-1795), the potter.

Sir Francis Burdett (1770-1844), radical politician.

204. *King's . . . speech.* At the opening of Parliament, Nov. 20.

Brown, the Egyptian traveller. William George Browne (1768-1813), whose 'Travels in Africa, Egypt, and Syria 1792-98' appeared in 1800.

S——s. Symmonds's. See p. 205 and Note to p. 152.

205. *Ward, the pugilist.* Ould Joe Ward, the father of the prize ring (b. 1751). See Pierce Egan's 'Boxiana,' vol. i. p. 424, and vol. iii. p. 496.

Jew K——. John King. See a letter from Godwin to him, Jan. 24, 1796, concerning 'the frequency of my visits' (Kegan Paul's 'Godwin,' i. 155).

206. *the daughters of Horne Tooke.* Mary and Charlotte Hart, his illegitimate daughters.

the Wheel of Fortune. 1795. By Cumberland.

208. *Canning's fine speech.* Tierney had moved a peace proposal on Dec. 11. Canning's speech against the motion (which was negatived) occupies thirty-eight columns in the 'Parliamentary History.'

209. *Northcote.* James Northcote (1746-1831).

West. Benjamin West (1738-1820), painter.

212. *Dr. Beddoes.* Thomas Beddoes (1760-1808). He was the father of Thomas Lovell Beddoes.

Wedgewood. Thomas Wedgwood (1771-1805), the friend of Coleridge.

Parkinson, jun. . . . Parkinson, sen. James Parkinson (1730 ?-1813) won Sir Ashton Lever's Museum (1784) by lottery. Placed in a building erected for it at the Surrey side of Blackfriars Bridge (later the home of the Surrey Institution), it was one of the sights of London. It was sold by auction in 1806. Joseph Parkinson, son of the above (1783-1855), was an architect, and designed the Library of the Leverian Museum.

Lillo's Fatal Curiosity. 1736. By George Lillo (1693-1739).

213. *L——.* Willoughby Lacy, Garrick's partner at Drury Lane.

214. *Brueys.* François Paul Brueys d'Aigalliers (1753-1798), the French admiral who commanded the fleet in the Egyptian expedition. He was killed at the battle of Aboukir.

Serres. Dominic Serres (1722-1793), of Gascon birth, was marine painter to the king; he was succeeded in that office by his son, John Thomas Serres (1759-1825).

215. '*the Jew and the Doctor.*' 1798. By Thomas J. Dibdin (1771-1841).

216. *Le Bon.* Joseph Le Bon (1765-1795); his acts against the opponents of the Revolution were very harsh, and they led to his being guillotined.

217. *Tierney's motion.* Tierney complained on the 27th against the 'Times' for misrepresenting speeches of members. The motion was withdrawn on the 31st after satisfactory assurances from the editor to Tierney.

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217. *Lord Holland.* Henry Richard Vassall Fox, 3rd Lord Holland (1773-1840). He is referred to later as Lord H——.

N——s . . . academy. Nicholson opened a school in Soho, but it had only a brief career.

218. *His speech in the Lords.* The third reading of the Bill for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus came up in the Lords on Jan. 3. After it was carried Lord Holland entered a protest on the Journals.

219. '*The Votary of Wealth.*' 1799. By Joseph George Holman (1764-1817), the original Harry Dornton in Holcroft's 'Road to Ruin.'

Belsham from Davenant. Probably William Belsham (1752-1827), a writer on the Whig side, and brother of the Unitarian divine. *Davenant:* Dr. Charles D. (1656-1714), political economist.

220. *as the lion, etc.* 'Troilus and Cressida,' III. 3.

221. *Lord Camelford's attempt.* Thomas Pitt, 2nd Baron Camelford (1775-1804), naval commander, tried to go to France to procure a set of French charts, using a French refugee's letter of introduction to Barras, in which he was set forth as one ready to serve the French Government. The suspicions of the boatmen, however, were aroused, and he was handed over to the English Government officials. He was examined by the Privy Council, and, although set at liberty, the Admiralty disapproved of his action and relieved him of the command of his ship.

Girton. Thomas Girtin (1775-1802), water-colour painter, of whom Turner said, 'Had Tom Girtin lived, I should have starved.'

Artois. Jacques d'Artois, Flemish painter of rural scenes (1613?-1678).

Barry, the painter. James Barry (1741-1806), painter of the large pictures 'Human Culture' for the Society of Arts.

222. *his verses on young statesmen.* A political *jeu d'esprit* 'On the Young Statesmen' attributed to Dryden.

Paul Benfield. See note to p. 176.

C. Grey, M.P. (1764-1845), afterwards the 2nd Earl Grey.

Lord S——s Address. Charles, 3rd Earl Stanhope (1753-1816), of revolutionary sympathies, issued an 'address to the Nations of Great Britain and Ireland' against the proposed Union.

'*the Sorcerer*' . . . *Veil Weber.* An edition of *The Sorcerer*, a Tale, from the German of Veit Weber, was published in London in 1795.

Knight. Thomas Knight (d. 1820).

224. *S——, a painter.* Probably John Smart (1741-1811), miniature painter, who was in India for some years between 1788 and 1797.

Dr. Drennan. William Drennan (1754-1820), M.D., Irish poet, and a leader of the United Irishmen.

225. *Metzu.* Gabriel Metzu (1615-1658), Dutch painter.

226. *Incledon.* Charles Incledon (1763-1826), vocalist.

Master Field. John Field (1782-1837). After his *début* as an infant prodigy (he had played at a public concert with Clementi in 1794 or -95) he went on a continental tour with Clementi, and finally settled down in Russia, where his music was much appreciated.

Brothers. Richard Brothers (1757-1824), fanatic, who set forth in 1793 as the nephew of the Almighty.

227. *R. A.* R. Adair. See note to p. 169.

228. *Mr. Drummond.* Samuel Drummond (1765-1844), portrait and historical painter.

Cadell. Thomas Cadell the younger (1773-1836).

Brown's travels. See note to p. 204.

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228. *Secret.* 1799. By Edward Morris.

Feudal Times. 1799. By George Colman the younger.

229. *Deaf and Dumb*, or the Orphan protected, an historical drama taken from the French of J. N. Bouilly (under the name of Herbert Hill). 1801.

232. *Travels in France.* Travels from Hamburg, through Westphalia, Holland, and the Netherlands, to Paris. 1804. 2 vols.

235. *The Escapes*, or the Water-Carrier. Covent Garden, Oct. 14, 1801.

A Tale of Mystery. Covent Garden, Nov. 13, 1802.

The Lady of the Rock. Feb. 12, 1805, Drury Lane.

The Vindictive Man. A Comedy, 1806, Drury Lane.

236. *the Theatrical Recorder.* See note to p. 76.

'*Tales in Verse.*' Critical, Satirical, and Humorous, 1806. 2 vols.

'*Brian Perdue.*' Memoirs of Bryan Perdue, 1805. 3 vols. ?

242. *our worthy and liberal friend G.* Godwin.

245. *snows.* Brig-like vessels.

Pocock. Robert Pocock of Gravesend. His 'Gravesend Water Companion, describing all the towns, churches, villages, parishes, and gentlemen's seats, as seen from the River Thames, between London Bridge and Gravesend Town,' was published in 1798.

traject. Passage.

246. *The potentate of the North . . . Peter . . . Paul.* Probably the Czars Paul (1754-1801) and Peter the Great (1672-1725) are intended. Paul, an imperious and capricious Emperor, reigned 1796-1801.

251. *Culpepper.* Nicholas Culpeper (1616-1654), herbalist.

252. *Pontoppidan.* Eric Pontoppidan (1698-1764), author of 'The Natural History of Norway.'

255. *ancient Pistol.* 'Merry Wives of Windsor' and 'Henry IV.'

267. *Mr. Professor Dugald Stewart*, philosopher and metaphysician (1753-1828).

268. *Les Veillées du Chateau.* See note to p. 104.

Madame de Genlis. Stephanie Félicité du Crest de Saint-Aubin, Countess de Genlis (1746-1830), a voluminous writer.

270. *Theatre d'Education.* 'Théâtre à l'usage des jeunes personnes' (1779-80). 'Théâtre de Société' (1781).

271. *Lord Kaimes's Sketches of Man.* Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782). 'Sketches of the History of Man' (1774).

273. *Mrs. Colles.* ? Mrs. Cole, Holcroft's daughter, see p. 143, note.

278. Note. *The Pantisocrasy Scheme.* The Utopian 'all men are equal' scheme, advocated by Southey, Coleridge, and Lovell (*c.* 1794).

279. *Mr Dermody.* Thomas Dermody (1775-1802).

Robert Lovell (1770?-1796). The associate of Southey and Coleridge in their plan for an ideal life on the banks of the Susquehanna. The three friends married three sisters.

280. *Mergées.* Mr. W. C. Hazlitt writes that this name should be Merger.

281. *From Madame de Genlis.* This letter would seem to be the one to which Holcroft replied. See p. 268.

LIBER AMORIS

The facts relating to the episode in Hazlitt's life which is the subject of this book are referred to in the General Introduction to the present edition (see vol. i.

pp. xviii, xix), but it may be useful to give here a brief summary of them, and to refer shortly to the few later books which throw further light upon the matter.

Before the autumn of 1819 Hazlitt and his wife had ceased to live together, and in 1820 Hazlitt went to lodge in the house of a tailor named Walker, at No. 9 Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, where, on August 16, he first saw the heroine of this book, Sarah Walker, the elder of his landlord's two unmarried daughters. Some time in the same year (1820), or in the following year, Mrs. Hazlitt agreed, or rather, as we must assume (since she afterwards took the Oath of Calumny), decided to take proceedings for divorce under the Scottish law, for which purpose it was necessary for both parties to go to Scotland. Hazlitt accordingly started for Edinburgh early in 1822, and reached Scotland in February, after having been detained for a time at Stamford, where he began 'a book of our conversations (I mean mine and the statue's), which I call LIBER AMORIS.' Mrs. Hazlitt did not arrive in Edinburgh till April 21, and the business of the divorce was not finally settled till July. Hazlitt spent the greater part of the time between March and July either in Edinburgh or at Renton Inn, Berwickshire, whence he addressed several of his letters to his friend, P. G. Patmore, and where he wrote some of the essays which subsequently appeared in vol. ii. of *Table Talk*. In May he delivered two lectures at Glasgow, one (May 6) on Milton and Shakespeare, the other (May 13) on Thomson and Burns. From Glasgow he seems to have gone for a short trip to the Highlands with his friend Sheridan Knowles, to whom he afterwards addressed the concluding letters of *Liber Amoris*. Towards the end of May he paid a hurried visit to London, returning to Scotland early in June. The book itself was published anonymously by John Hunt in 1823, the copyright being purchased from Hazlitt by C. H. Reynell for £100.

It is unnecessary to refer to the many merely critical comments on the book and its story, and it remains only to mention the works which may be regarded as additional and authoritative sources of information. P. G. Patmore devoted to the subject one chapter (vol. iii. pp. 171-188) of his lengthy recollections of Hazlitt in *My Friends and Acquaintance* (3 vols., 1854), and published extracts from some of the letters he had received from Hazlitt. Further extracts from the same correspondence and extracts from the journal kept by Mrs. Hazlitt in Scotland appeared in Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's *Memoirs of William Hazlitt* (2 vols., 1867). All these letters (with a few trifling exceptions) and the whole of Mrs. Hazlitt's journal were printed from the original MSS. in Mr. Le Gallienne's edition of *Liber Amoris*, published in 1894 (see Bibliographical Note, *ante*, p. 284). This edition contains also a transcript of the original MS. of *Liber Amoris* (Part I.) (believed to be in the handwriting of Patmore with additions written by Hazlitt), and (besides Mr. Le Gallienne's introduction) an unsigned essay by Mr. W. C. Hazlitt, entitled 'Hazlitt from another point of view.' B. W. Procter (Barry Cornwall), who visited Hazlitt at Southampton Buildings, referred to the subject in his Recollections of Men of Letters (see *Bryan Waller Procter, An Autobiographical Fragment*, 1877, pp. 180-82). Finally, in *Lamb and Hazlitt* (1900), Mr. W. C. Hazlitt published for the first time a MS. which contains Hazlitt's comment on the experiences of Patmore (recorded in the form of a Diary), from March 4 to March 16, 1822, during which time he appears to have been (at Hazlitt's request) a lodger at No. 9 Southampton Buildings. This MS. is entirely in Hazlitt's handwriting.

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288. '*with looks*,' *etc.* *Il Penseroso*, l. 38.

290. '*But I will come again, my love*,' *etc.* Burns's song, 'O, my luve is like a red, red rose.'

'*Pensive nun*,' *etc.* *Il Penseroso*, l. 31.

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294. *Mr. M——.* Sarah Walker's elder sister had married a man called Roscoe, who is referred to in the *Liber Amoris* as 'Mr. M——.'

300. *'What is this world,' etc.* Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (*The Knightes Tale*, ll. 2777-79).

301. *'So shalt thou find me,' etc.* Byron's *Sardanapalus*, Act iv. Scene 1.

Rosetta. In Bickerstaffe's *Love in a Village*, one of the most successful parts played by Catherine Stephens (1794-1882). See Hazlitt's Dramatic Essays.

302. *Mr. Macready.* William Charles Macready (1793-1873) appears to have played Romeo at Covent Garden on Jan. 24, 1822.

303. *'Oh! if I thought,' etc.* *Troilus and Cressida*, Act iii. Scene 2.

304. *C. P——, Esq.* Peter George Patmore (1786-1855), journalist, and author of *Imitations of Celebrated Authors, etc.* (1826), *Chatsworth, or the Romance of a Week* (1844), *The Mirror of the Months* (1826), and other works. His recollections of Hazlitt in *My Friends and Acquaintance* (3 vols., 1854) are interesting and even valuable if allowance is made for some exaggeration. He was the father of Coventry Patmore. See B. Champney's, *Memoirs and Correspondence of Coventry Patmore* (1900), chap. ii.

Bees-Inn. Renton Inn, on the London Road, near Grant's House in Berwickshire, forty-one miles from Edinburgh.

306. *'Of such sweet breath composed.'* *Hamlet*, Act iii. Scene 1.

'Answer me that, Master Brook.'

> 'Think of that, Master Brook.'
> *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act iii. Scene 5.

Letter III. From Edinburgh, March 30, 1822.

307. *Letter IV.* From Edinburgh, April 21, 1822.

308. *'To lip a chaste one,' etc.*

> 'To lip a wanton in a secure couch,
> And to suppose her chaste.'
> *Othello*, Act iv. Scene 1.

Strike my forehead against the stars.

> 'Quod si me lyricis vatibus inseris,
> Sublimi feriam sidera vertice.'
> Horace, Odes, I. 1. 35-36.

As Rousseau said. 'Ce fut dans ce bosquet qu'assis avec elle sur un banc de gazon, sous un acacia tout chargé de fleurs, je trouvai, pour rendre les mouvements de mon cœur, un langage vraiment digne d'eux.'—*Confessions*, Liv. ix., p. 393 (édit. Garnier).

Letter V. From Edinburgh, April 7, 1822.

From Montrose. This is of course fiction, like Hazlitt's statement in the advertisement that the author was a native of North Britain (see *ante*, p. 285).

309. *'Treason domestic,' etc.* *Macbeth*, Act iii. Scene 2.

311. *Letter VII.* From Edinburgh, June 20-21, 1822.

'And carved on every tree,' etc. *As You Like It*, Act iii. Scene 2.

312. *Letter VIII.* From Renton Inn, June 9, 1822.

314. *Its mighty heart, etc.* Cf. 'And all that mighty heart was lying still' in Wordsworth's Sonnet 'Composed upon Westminster Bridge.'

The Prince of Critics, etc. Francis Jeffrey (1773-1850) had lived at Craigcrook (on the north-eastern slope of Corstorphine Hill, not on 'the far-off Pentland Hills') since 1815. Hazlitt had already contributed several

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articles to the *Edinburgh Review*, and had met Jeffrey during his visit to Scotland.

314. *As I read of Amy and her love.* *Kenilworth* had been published in the preceding year (1821).

315. *Letter IX.* From Edinburgh, July 3, 1822.

316. '*Made my wedded wife yestreen.*' Burns's *Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn*, st. 10.

Like Lady Bellaston. *Tom Jones*, Book xv. Chap. ix.

The old song. Hazlitt refers perhaps to Richard Hewitt's 'Roslin Castle,' beginning ''Twas in that season of the year,' published in Johnson's *The Scots Musical Museum* (1787-1803), and praised by Burns.

317. *Letter X.* From Renton Inn, June 18, 1822.

'*All below was not the fiend's.* *King Lear*, Act IV. Scene 6.

319. *Hysterica passio.* Cf. *King Lear*, Act II. Scene 4.

Letter XI. From Edinburgh (?), June 25, 1822.

320. '*She 's gone*,' *etc.*

> 'She 's gone; I am abused, and my relief
> Must be to loathe her.'
>
> *Othello*, Act III. Scene 3.

321. *Letter XII.* This is merely a postscript to the former letter (XI.).

'*Love is not love, etc.* Shakespeare's Sonnets, No. CXVI.

325. *Letter XIII.* July 8, 1822.

'*I have mistook*,' *etc.*

> 'I do mistake my person all this while:
> Upon my life, she finds, although I cannot,
> Myself to be a marvellous proper man.'
>
> *Richard III.*, Act. I. Scene 2.

328. *Addressed to J. S. K——.* Hazlitt's friend, James Sheridan Knowles (1784-1862), the dramatist, who at this time lived at Glasgow. There is a reference to him in Hazlitt's *Spirit of the Age*, at the end of the essay on Elia and Geoffrey Crayon.

Smollett's monument. Erected by James Smollett, the novelist's cousin, whom Johnson and Boswell visited on their way from the Highlands. The Latin inscription for the monument was partly the work of Johnson (Boswell's *Life, etc.*, ed. G. B. Hill, v. 366-68).

Logan's beautiful verses to the cuckoo. Published originally by John Logan (1748-1788) in a volume entitled 'Poems on Several Occasions, by Michael Bruce' (1770). It appeared again in 1781, with a few alterations, in 'Poems, by the Rev. Mr. Logan, one of the ministers of Leith.' Some difference of opinion still exists as to the authorship, which is claimed by some for Michael Bruce (1746-1767), a fellow-student of Logan's at Edinburgh University. See *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., vii. 466; viii. 70, 148, 312, 388, 527.

Note. The verses begin, 'Hail, beauteous stranger of the grove.' The stanza quoted by Hazlitt is the sixth.

329. *The Trossacs.* Whatever the 'blue ridges' may have been which Hazlitt saw, they were certainly nowhere near the Trossachs.

'*Italiam, Italiam.*' Possibly from Filicaja's Sonnet (LXXXVII.) to Italy, beginning 'Italia, Italia, o tu cui feo la sorte,' and translated by Byron in *Childe Harold* (Canto IV., St. 42).

330. *Heaved her name, etc.* *King Lear*, Act IV. Scene 3.

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330. *How near am I, etc.* Quoted, with omissions, from Middleton's *Women beware Women* (*Works*, ed. Dyce, iv. 569-70).

331. '*Quicquid agit,' etc.*

> 'Illam quidquid agit, quoquo vestigia movit
> Componit furtim subsequiturque decor.'

From the first of the Sulpicia poems (not the work of Tibullus) in the fourth book of the Elegies.

334. '*See with what a waving air,' etc.* B. W. Procter's (Barry Cornwall's) *Mirandola* (Act I. Scene 3).

335. '*What conjurations,' etc.* *Othello*, Act I. Scene 3.

336. '*Nature and Art.*' By Mrs. Inchbald, published in 1796.

337. '*Ugly all over with hypocrisy.*' See *ante*, note to p. 130.

340. *At once he took, etc.*

> 'Then took his Muse at once and dipt her
> Full in the middle of the Scripture.'
>
> Gay, 'Verses to be placed under the Picture of Sir Richard Blackmore, England's Arch-Poet, etc.'

341. '*Drugged this posset.*' *Macbeth*, Act II. Scene 2.

342. '*Bestow some of my tediousness upon you.*'

'*Dogberry.* But truly, for mine own part, if I were tedious as a king, I could find it in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

Leonato. All thy tediousness on me, ah?'

Much Ado About Nothing, Act III. Scene 5.

343. '*Of tears which sacred pity,' etc.* *As You Like It*, Act II. Scene 7.

347. *The False Florimel.* *The Faerie Queene*, Book III. Canto viii.

The man in the Arabian Nights. See The History of Sidi Nouman.

350. '*Turned all to favour and to prettiness.*' *Hamlet*, Act IV. Scene 5.

356. *Heroes, according to Rousseau.* Cf. 'Le brave ne fait ses preuves qu'aux jours de bataille : le vrai héros fait les siennes tous les jours ; et ses vertus, pour se montrer quelquefois en pompe, n'en sont pas d'un usage moins fréquent sous un extérieur plus modeste.' *Discours sur la vertu la plus nécessaire aux héros.*

CHARACTERISTICS

360. *The wish is often* '*father to the thought.*' *Henry IV.*, Part II. Act IV. Scene 5.

364. '*Some trick not worth an egg.*' *Coriolanus*, Act IV. Scene 4.

365. '*Spy abuses.*' 'It is my nature's plague to spy into abuses.' *Othello*, Act III. Scene 3.

Emery's acting. John Emery (1777-1822). See Hazlitt's Dramatic Essays, where he speaks of Emery in similar terms.

366. '*Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.*' Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, l. 625.

367. '*A jest's prosperity,' etc.* *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act V. Scene 2.

'*Quite chop-fallen.*' *Hamlet*, Act V. Scene 1.

368. *Russell.* Samuel Thomas Russell (1769?-1845), famous for his acting of Jerry Sneak in Foote's *Mayor of Garratt* (1763), a part created by Thomas Weston (1737-1776). Edward Shuter (1728?-1776), whom Garrick described as the greatest comic genius he had ever seen. For Joseph

Shepherd Munden (1758-1832), John Bannister (1760-1836), and John Liston (1776?-1846), see the volume containing Hazlitt's Dramatic Criticisms.

368. *'Men of no mark or likelihood.' Henry IV.*, Part I. Act III. Scene 2.

369. *'Bare to weather.' Cymbeline*, Act III. Scene 3.

'Poison in jest.' Hamlet, Act III. Scene 2.

370. *'A soul supreme,' etc. Epistle to Robert, Earl of Oxford*, ll. 23-26.

'Lay the flattering unction to their souls.' Hamlet, Act III. Scene 4.

The author of 'Waverley.' Scott publicly acknowledged his authorship at a dinner on behalf of the Theatrical Fund on Feb. 23, 1827. See Lockhart (ix. 79-84).

371. *'In conscience and tender heart.'* 'Al was conscience and tendre heart.'—Chaucer, *Prologue*, 150.

372. *Mandeville.* Bernard Mandeville (1670?-1733), author of 'The Fable of the Bees' (1714).

377. *'To snatch a grace,' etc.* Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, l. 153.

378. *Video meliora, etc.* Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, 7, 21.

382. *'Minute drops from off the eaves.'*

Cf. 'His tears run down his beard, like winter's drops
From eaves of reeds.' *Tempest*, Act v. Scene 1.

383. *Lord Egmont.* John Perceval (1711-1770), 2nd Earl of Egmont (in the peerage of Ireland). The passage quoted is from a speech delivered in the House of Commons, against the Bill for the Naturalisation of Jews, on May 22, 1753 (not 1750). See *Parl. Hist.*, XIV., 1366-1430. Hazlitt included a part of the speech in his *Eloquence of the British Senate* (ii. 519-21), where the year is also wrongly given. In a note on the passage quoted in the text he says: 'This passage discovers more real depth of thought than any thing else I have met with in the course of these debates. There may be observations of equal value in Burke, but there is no single observation in any part of his works more profound, original, acute, and comprehensive: it may indeed be said to contain the germ of all his political reasoning. (See his French Revolution, etc.) In this speech we find the first denunciation of the intrusion of abstract theorems and metaphysical generalities into the science of politics.'

391. *'My wife! I have no wife.' Othello*, Act v. Scene 2.

Huckman. James Hackman (1752-1779) shot Martha Ray, mistress of the 4th Earl of Sandwich, on April 7, 1779, as she was leaving Covent Garden Theatre. According to his own story, he intended to kill neither Miss Ray nor Lord Sandwich, but himself. He had two pistols, a circumstance which led to a violent dispute between Dr. Johnson and Topham Beauclerk. See Boswell's *Life* (ed. G. B. Hill, iii. 383-85). Boswell accompanied him to Tyburn. Sir Herbert Croft in 1780 published an account of the tragedy in a series of fictitious letters entitled *Love and Madness.* Johnson disapproved of this 'mingling real facts with fiction' (*ibid.* iv. 287).

392. *'Where we must live,'* etc. *Othello*, Act IV. Scene 2.

'Age cannot wither,' etc. Antony and Cleopatra, Act II. Scene 2.

393. *Fontenelle said.* 'Si je tenais toutes les verités dans ma main, je me donnerais bien de garde de l'ouvrir aux hommes.'

395. *A second divorced his wife, etc.* Hazlitt here sums up the story of *Liber Amoris.*

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398. *Mr. Opie.* John Opie (1761-1807).
400. *And vindicates, etc.* Pope's *Essay on Man*, Ep. I. l. 16.
402. *Denner's.* Balthasar Denner, a mechanical German painter (1685-1749).
405. '*Baited with the rabble's curse.*' *Macbeth*, Act V. Scene 8.
'*Monstrum ingens, biforme.*'

> 'Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.'
> *Aeneid*, III. 658.

409. '*Men's judgments, etc.* *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act III. Scene 13.
413. *The Pleasures of Hope.* Thomas Campbell's *The Pleasures of Hope* was published in 1799; *The Pleasures of Memory*, by Samuel Rogers, in 1792.
415. *The Blacks, etc.* Joseph Black (1728-1799), Professor of Medicine and Chemistry in Edinburgh University; Antoine Laurent Lavoisier (1743-1799); Joseph Priestley (1733-1804); Charles Davenant (1656-1714), son of the poet; John De Witt (1625-1672); Jean Baptiste Say (1767-1832); David Ricardo (1772-1823), and his disciple John Ramsay M'Culloch (1789-1864); Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834), author of the famous *Essay on the Principle of Population, etc.* (1798).
416. *Rochefoucault observes.* Maxims, No. 261.
417. *The picture of* '*The Misers.*' *Les deux Avares* of Quentin Metzys or Massys (1466-1531). Hazlitt describes the picture in his *Sketches of the Principal Picture Galleries in England* (Pictures at Windsor Castle).

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